

# strategy

bold vision **brand** new ideas



## DEMO BOTOX

Brands join the quest for eternal youth

## LG CANADA'S RUNWAY GAMBIT PAYS OFF

William Cho & Andrew Barrett's style statement gets global nod





08

Geoffrey  
Roche  
Chief Creative  
Officer,  
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Executive Master of Design in Advertising\* OCAD.CA/MASTERMINDS

inside the **April 2008** issue

# VOLUME 19 ISSUE 9

12

## CREATIVE

Calling all Vespa-heads



**YOUTH**

Scotiabank taps  
the fountain

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## On the cover

We wanted to convey the fashion-forward aspect of LG Canada's new direction under president/CEO William Cho and VP marketing Andrew Barrett, and were wondering how we could pull it off without heading to Milan.

As luck would have it, LG was planning a "Next Top Models" show for their dealer network, and was able to produce the requisite runway and models. Voilà! One haute cover, *prêt à porter*.

After our photographer, Paul Perrier, got the perfect shot, LG hosted a dinner and fashion show for their retail partners at the Toronto Congress Centre. Barrett emceed with a script describing the couture in terms that also touted features of the 2008 LG collection, like the line of flat-screen TVs launching this month. Of course, no model could ever be *that* thin.



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**Strategy** bids a fond farewell to one of our industry's best and brightest, **Barry Base**.

## 66 back page

Nothing like a good mystery to get your grey matter moving.



# The quest for “our quality world”

Every year *strategy* checks in with youth marketing experts to see which brand hijinks have impressed the kids recently. This time around, the thing that stood out for our panel was how much the line between youth and adult advertising has blurred. It seems most brands want a youthful glow, and consequently, a lot are not acting their age. Which reflects the general fascination with youth culture, as evidenced by the “wrinkled Facebook” phenomenon.

This issue we explore why everyone wants to be like Diet Pepsi – forever young – and how that’s influencing serious categories, from big financial players unspooling YouTube spoofs to P&G paying homage to Subservient Chicken. We also check in with youth influencer brands MTV and Vice to see where they’re headed. Check it out, starting on page 45.

While Vice is a great example of a Made in Canada brand that’s achieved success abroad, we also look at a global brand tapping thought leadership out of Canada. Our cover story chronicles the rapid turnaround of LG Canada under president William Cho and marketing VP Andrew Barrett. This brand went from under the radar to ubiquity in short order, and this month’s Word from the Corner Office (starting on page 15) explains how.

• • • • •

We also pay tribute to another source of great Canadian ad leadership and inspiration: Barry Base, who recently passed away. For over a decade Barry wrote a column in *strategy*, alongside fellow ad icon John Burghardt. The columns were brilliant. John told us what folks were doing right, and Barry schooled the ones that hadn’t quite got there. USUALLY in emphatic type styles, with Random Caps and exclamatory passion!

Barry’s columns always made me laugh out loud, often followed by an “oh my” as I wondered which bits might trigger phone calls. They were one of a kind. As was Barry. Starting on page 64, his former colleagues, editors and Forum mate share their memories.

Barry seemed to have a single lens through which all his experiences – from sojourns in Paris to hosting the summer “Gravenhurst dorm” for his son Christian’s college pals – were viewed, and it was advertising. While he tended to point out the ridiculous, it was as a way to get readers’ attention long enough to teach them something. I’ll leave you with some vintage Barry, from his November 2004 column about Sleeman enjoining us to “Live Premium”:

“The Very Interesting California psychiatrist William Glasser maintains there is a place in our minds that we go to, from infancy onward, called *our quality world*. We did not say this is a real world, mind you. But it’s very real to us. It is the place we go in our minds to feel better about ourselves.

It is that beautiful house you are going to build for yourself one day, the perfect holiday memories you summon up on a dark winter evening. The friends you’ve had since you were a kid, who know and love you so well. The smell of leather that wafts from the air-conditioned interior of that Jag or Mercedes or BMW you drive. Or will someday.

And of course, your quality world occasionally contains the brands you find oddly, dare we say irrationally, *gratifying* to use. I think my anglophile Mom used HP Sauce on bacon because the Houses of Parliament were on the label. And of course, King George liked it too...

Dr. Glasser helped me define that place I have knocked myself out to take my client’s products and services all my career: *Into Your Quality World*. But it is the storyteller’s task to craft the means by which they gain access. Conjure up a King or two. *But don’t tell me to live premium. That’s a decision I alone will take or not, based on what you tell me.*

As the man said, *advertising is not about your aspirations.*

Barry, we’ll miss you taking us there. mm

Mary Maddever, exec editor, *strategy* and *Media in Canada*

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- **STYLE AT HOME** indexes at 314 for 60+ minutes of reading, **ranking number 1 for English measured titles.<sup>†</sup>**
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## Mark your calendar

Do you know someone in the advertising and media industry who gives selflessly of their time to help others in their community? If so, I encourage you to put their name forward to be considered for the Paul Mulvihill/NABS Humanitarian Award.

The award was created in 2000, when the Paul Mulvihill Charitable Foundation joined forces with NABS to honour individuals from the Canadian communications industry who have embodied the charitable spirit and actions of Paul Mulvihill, a pioneering broadcast rep known for his humanitarian work. The list of past recipients is a virtual who's who of the industry and includes Rupert Brendon, Johnny Lombardi, John Cassaday, Jim Patterson and Donald Bastien.

In an industry where awards are certainly regarded as a measure of success, this is perhaps one of the most meaningful. Nominations are open until Apr. 18 and can be made on behalf of anyone who currently or previously worked in the communications sector. Nomination forms are available at [nabs.org](http://nabs.org), or in French through NABS' Quebec chapter BEC.

And now some more critical dates for your diaries. On May 15, *strategy* presents a Mobile Marketing Workshop designed to offer marketers and media planners and buyers a crash course in mobile marketing opportunities. It's no secret that Canada lags behind the times in this medium, but that's all about to change. Content includes provocative research and case studies from international and Canadian mobile experts, and the afternoon will be hosted by Andy Nulman, president and CEO of Airborne Mobile. For the full agenda and speakers, please visit [strategymag.com/mobileworkshop](http://strategymag.com/mobileworkshop). The event takes place after lunch at Revival on College Street in Toronto, and all delegates are invited to attend "Five Years of Great Text", marking the fifth anniversary of common short codes in Canada, that same evening at The Mod Club across the street. Tickets are priced at \$175 and there are only 150 available, so don't hesitate to register today.

Also taking place on May 15 is the Bessies, reformatted as a gala evening this year. Celebrated Canadian author Douglas Coupland keynotes this event, so it's another must-attend. Tickets are available at [thebessies.ca](http://thebessies.ca).

The 11th annual Understanding Youth conference takes place at the Westin Harbour Castle on June 10. Caroline Vogt, head of international research, Microsoft Digital Advertising Solutions, EMEA & Americas, will share the findings of a global study, undertaken by MTV and Nickelodeon, examining how young people interact with digital technology. For details, visit [understandingyouth.com](http://understandingyouth.com).

And a final note for your calendar: if you're a marketer or CEO looking to learn how to incorporate corporate social responsibility (CSR) into your brand messaging, you should plan to attend *strategy*'s Social Responsibility Forum on Apr. 15. Details are at [strategymag.com/socialresponsibility](http://strategymag.com/socialresponsibility).

It's also a wrap for the founder of Brunico Communications, which publishes *strategy*. After selling the company and sitting as chair for the past year, Jim Shenkman has left the building for new adventures. Jim spent over two decades building Brunico into the business it is today, launching with *Playback* in 1986. He'll be spending the upcoming months travelling and catching up on time with his family. Jim, you'll be missed.

'Til next month, go well. **cm**

Claire Macdonald, publisher, *strategy* and *Media in Canada* (416) 408-0858

## SPONSORED ALSO IN THIS ISSUE... SUPPLEMENTS

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## Community Newspapers

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# “And the viral infection t

## MICHELINA'S DANCES AWAY FROM JINGLE



Goodbye Macarena. Hello Mama. Frozen dinner brand Michelina's is ditching its Macarena-inspired jingles in favour of a tough Italian mama, Michelina Pastarelli, who bullies people into eating her food. The new positioning was developed with Toronto-based John St., and the new tag is "Let Mama Feed You."

"We felt that the category had become somewhat commoditized, and we wanted to do something with personality," says John Yen, director, consumer marketing at Toronto-based Bellisio Foods Canada. "This is about as irreverent as I've seen this category get."

Two TV spots broke last month, as well as a multifaceted effort built around the character on Facebook. Mama has her own corporate page, as well as her own grassroots "profile." The corporate page will house the TV spots, advergames and regular vlogs by Mama. The latter will also be seeded on YouTube.

"[The Facebook profile] is really an opportunity to build a rapport with our target," says Yen, adding that the target is tech-savvy, tends to have a spontaneous, "carpe diem" mindset and eats to live rather than living to eat. **AB**

## PICK FROM ABROAD: Mexico WAL-MART DE MEXICO SIGNS SPORTACUS

Wal-Mart de Mexico is bringing in the big guns to mark its stance against childhood obesity. It just signed a multi-year agreement with Iceland-based LazyTown Entertainment, the international entertainment brand dedicated to promoting children's health whose main star is spandex-clad athlete Sportacus.

The partnership will see healthy LazyTown products in Mexican Wal-Mart locations, as well as co-branded mass campaigns, events and targeted promos later this year.

LazyTown's characters are well known from its TV, radio, theatrical, music and publishing ventures. The company was founded by athlete Magnús Scheving.

This isn't the first time the companies have worked together: last year, the retailer rolled out healthy LazyTown menu options in its in-store Vips restaurants. **AB**



## LCBO SERVES UP ECO-PACKAGING INNOVATIONS

◀ By Carey Toane ▶

The Liquor Control Board of Ontario (LCBO) is launching its first eco-awareness campaign this month. Envirochic highlights products with alternative packaging, such as Tetra Paks, PET, aluminum, reused glass and bag-in-a-box.



Among the innovations is an aluminum wine bottle from Burgundy vintner Mommessin which turns colour when the wine reaches its optimal temperature.

"They're fun, and quite fashionable," says LCBO VP marketing Nancy Cardinal, adding that the new packaging materials are also lightweight and unbreakable. "There are

lots of things you can do in addition to being better for the environment."

LCBO president and CEO Bob Peter first issued a challenge to suppliers to develop packaging alternatives in 2005. That year, the LCBO introduced the first wine in a Tetra Pak, French Rabbit. The next year saw the first wine in a PET bottle. Now the LCBO carries over 200 products in those two materials.

"It's been quite incredible how the suppliers have stepped up to the plate and embraced the challenge," says Cardinal. "We couldn't have had this promotion really until this point, and there's just so much that we can showcase as part of Envirochic."

The challenge was part of a larger corporate goal to eliminate 10 million kg of waste per year; that target has since been surpassed by an additional four million kg annually. Annual sales of alternatively packaged products now exceed \$120 million.

The campaign, created by the LCBO's Toronto-based AOR, GJP Advertising, includes 750,000 full-colour inserts in newspapers across the province, in-store banners and brochures, and runs until Apr. 28.

## CLARIFICATION

In last month's Marketer of the Year profile of the LCBO's Nancy Cardinal, she was mistakenly credited with store design, which is in fact the responsibility of the store planning department under Jackie Bonic, VP store design and real estate. *Strategy* regrets the error.

# thing is just catching on”

## BMW GLOWS WITH VICE

Front Cover:



Now you see it, now you don't.

Whitby, Ont.-based BMW Canada has found a way to sneak an ad onto the cover of the April issue of Vice magazine. At first glance, it looks like any other cover. But when the lights go out, a

glow-in-the-dark ad for the BMW 1 Series appears, with the 1 appearing where the "I" in Vice usually does.

"The media strategy for the 1 Series is all about short, intense experiences," explains Esme Rottshafer, group account director at Toronto-based The Media Company. "We knew [the cover ad] would be tough to do, but it was an innovative one-off that fit beautifully with the strategy."

While typical Vice readers aren't a perfect match for the 1 Series target (25- to 34-year-old ambitious "leaders-in-the-making"), they do tend to be influential early adopters who are good at creating buzz.

"The chance to work with one of the top brands in the world meant we had to step up and bring something that, to my knowledge, has never been done before," says Shawn Phelan, director of sales at Vice's Toronto office. "Maintaining the integrity of our cover – which is not usually for sale – while delivering a unique and rad brand message for BMW was an amazing challenge."

The glow-in-the-dark ad, which is appearing on the cover of Vice's entire Canadian print run, wasn't easy to make. Vice had to print the covers at one plant, ship them to another to add the glow-in-the-dark treatment, UV coat them once they were cured, then ship them back to the original plant to bind them to the rest of the mag. Toronto-based Cundari handled the creative. **AB**

## SONY ERICSSON FOCUSES ON MOBILE PHOTOS

Calling all camera phone *artistes*.

Mississauga, Ont.-based Sony Ericsson Canada has launched an online contest to find "Canada's Next Top Mobile Phone Photographer," in a ploy to catch the attention of camera phone enthusiasts. Contestants can submit photos taken with any mobile phone to the microsite [Sonyericsson.com/ca/thesearch](http://Sonyericsson.com/ca/thesearch), where there is an abundance of product info about the new Sony Ericsson K850i Cyber-Shot five-megapixel camera phone.



Three finalists will each receive new phones and be invited to submit an outstanding photo taken with the K850i for a chance to win the

grand prize of \$10,000 towards a "picture-perfect" vacation.

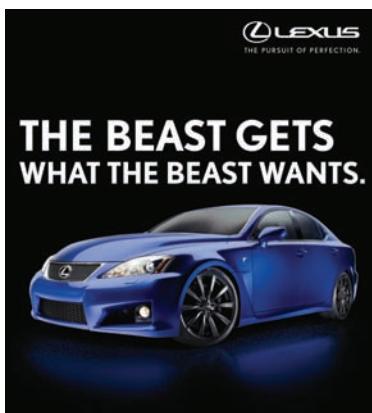
"We're targeting 'experiencers': people who are looking to get more out of their phones," says Jennifer Bromley, Sony Ericsson's head of marketing, adding that the new model has the same features a digital camera does, like zoom and red-eye reduction. "Our key point is that with this phone, they no longer have to carry a camera with them."

Aside from a PR push, the contest will be promoted exclusively online, with banner ads on sites like Flickr, MySpace, PhotoBucket and the *Globe and Mail* Day in Pictures section. The contest will be judged by *Canadian Idol* winner Brian Melo, web media specialist Amber MacArthur and photographer Peter F. Burian.

Sony Ericsson worked with Toronto-based agencies The iPR Group and Mediaedge:cia, as well as Iris' New York office on the promo. **AB**

## Brilliant!

◀ By Annette Bourdeau ▶



## Lexus lets you see what raw power looks like

Toyota Canada's luxury brand is launching a ridiculously high-performance model called the IS F this spring. The speedometer goes to 300, and it has eight gears and a 416hp engine. To play this up, Toronto-based AOR Dentsu Canada is putting together an "artists' series" of visual interpretations of the engine's performance.

There is serious power under the hood of the IS F. And to ensure its seductiveness and raw energy is most explicitly captured, the original engine rev was recorded by Los Angeles-based sound engineer Patricio A. Libenson, who worked on *Pulp Fiction* and *The Aviator*.

The notion of using sound, rather than speed-demon imagery, seemed to best match the sensibilities of the fortysomething guy who may want Ferrari-level power, but doesn't want to look like a poser, so will plunk down 70K for the minimally badged (discreet F on the back) adrenaline shot moment. To get his attention, the revving sounds, accompanied by kaleidoscopic graphic images, will be coming at you this month via cinema screens and OOH projections developed with Toronto-based prodco Crush, displayed by Optiadmedia. The car's 15-speaker sound system will handle audio for the Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver showings.

"It's not a braggart-y car," says Glen Hunt, Dentsu's creative catalyst. "It appeals to somebody who's got power but doesn't want to flaunt it." There will also be billboard and print ads to support the IS F launch.

# WATER COOLER

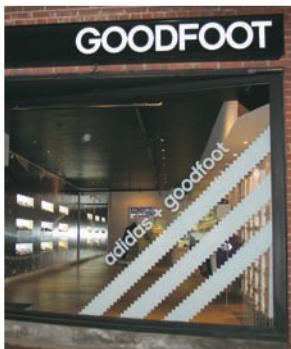
## ASKING CANADIANS

While it would be a stretch to call *strategy* a fashion magazine, no fewer than three brands gracing the pages of this issue are working to associate themselves with that most fickle of worlds: Adidas (see story page 20), Vespa (see page 14) and LG (see page 17). We wondered if consumers were catching onto the trend or if, in their eyes, the positioning was only posing.

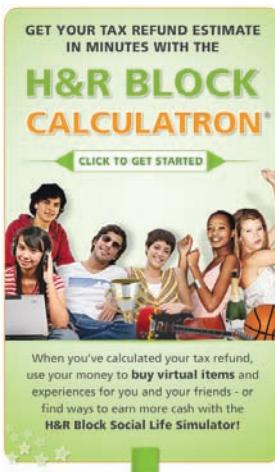
### Which brand do you associate most with style and fashion?

Adidas	52%
LG	35.4%
Vespa	12.6%

This poll of 1,000 Canadians was conducted by the AskingCanadians™ online panel from Mar. 5 to 6, 2008. AskingCanadians™ is owned and operated by Delvinia Data Collection. [www.delvinia.com](http://www.delvinia.com)



## H&R BLOCK SCHOOLS STUDENTS ON TAXES



Calgary-based H&R Block Canada is trying to change taxes' bad rap with the Calculatron, a Facebook application aimed at college, university and high school students.

"Students make up a large population of our clients, and we're always trying to find new ways to come into contact with them," says H&R Block senior tax analyst Cleo Hamel. "This is another opportunity we decided to jump into, because everybody's into Facebook these days."

Students can enter their income, province, tuition and tax withheld into the Calculatron to receive an estimated return. Then they can spend it in the Social Life Simulator, which offers an array of virtual activities, from dinner and a movie to piercings and tattoos.

The app will be pushed through emails advertising the \$29.99 2008 tax return special. Users can invite friends to join them on their cyber-splurges, and all Facebook activity is logged in a user's News Feed.

"If I've been on there four or five times a day for the last week, anybody watching is going to wonder why and check it out," says Hamel. "And the viral infection thing is just catching on, so for us it's great, because people will see our brand a little more often."

Designed by H&R Block's AOR, Due North Communications, and built by Dashboard, both of Toronto, the app is geared to student incomes under \$30,000. The application currently has 2,725 users, 218 daily active users and 31 fans. **CT**

## BEAUTIFYING THE MEDICINE CHEST

Who said cold sore cream can't be sexy?

Calgary-based Taiga Bioactives is taking a cue from the beauty category and completely overhauling its cold sore cream brand. Its formula was previously called Korner's, and blended right in among its mundane medicinal counterparts. Now, with help from Cincinnati, OH.-based agency Eisen Management Group (EMG), it's relaunching as Dr. Krane's KoolLips, and looks like it would be more at home in the cosmetics section than the medicine aisle.

"What most cold sore treatments completely ignore is the fact that people feel ugly when they have a cold sore," says Rodger Roeser, EMG's president. "We tried to bring more sophistication and sex appeal to the brand. We want to get people back to looking good quickly."

Since 70% of Canadian cold sore sufferers are female, KoolLips opted to target women first. EMG developed a profile to represent the ideal target: her name is Laura, she's 34, married with no kids and works at a Calgary ad firm. Looking good is important to her; she doesn't want any unsightly cold sores during presentations or social events.

The new packaging boasts a sleek black, purple and gold look, and has two variations: a small matchbook-like shell as well as a version that looks like a mini-purse. Both are just hitting the shelves now at pharmacies across Canada, as the old Korner's packaging transitions out.

The marketing strategy to support the rebranding effort is two-fold: first, a PR blitz to educate people about cold sore treatment in general; then a mass campaign including print ads in fashion and beauty mags like *Flare*, *Lou Lou* and *Glow* later this year.

KoolLips will roll out a male-centric package later, with packaging that's more "tool box" than purse. Taiga is a bioscience company that produces naturally derived personal care, over-the-counter and prescription remedies. **AB**



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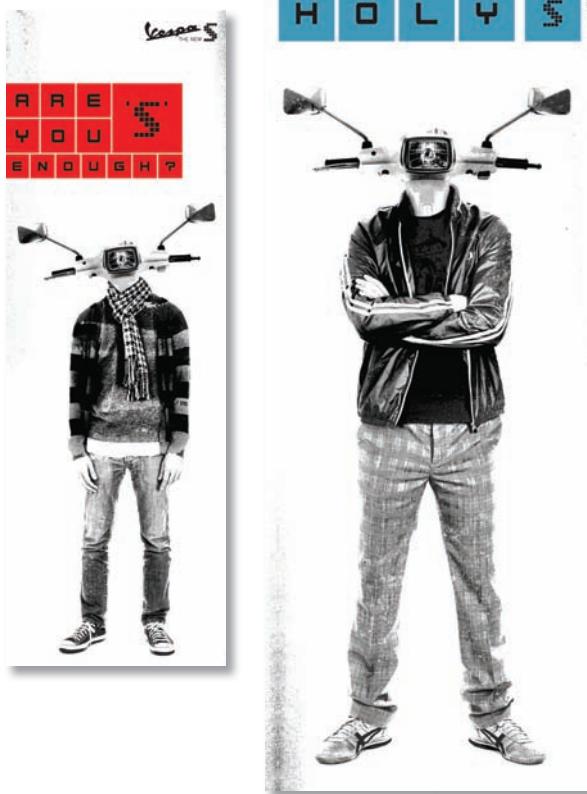
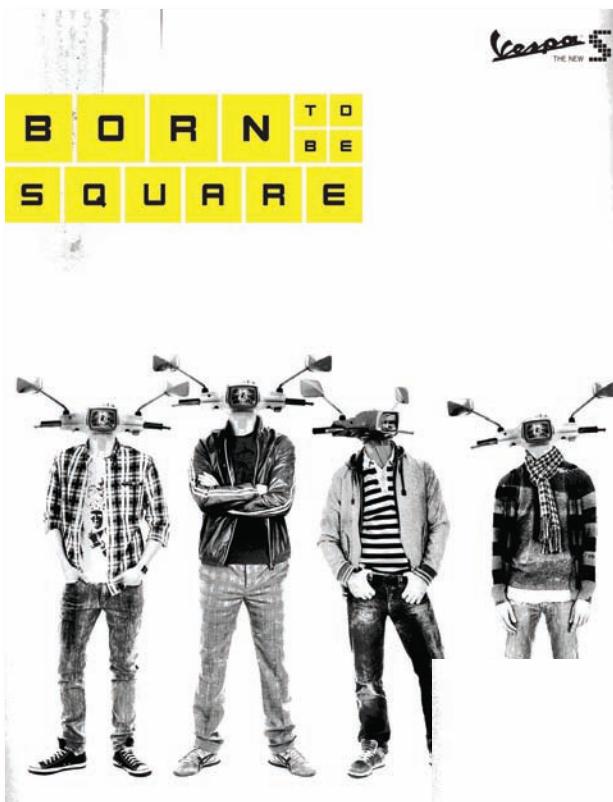
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# OUTSTANDING NEW CAMPAIGNS



◀ By Annette Bourdeau ▶



## VESPA'S GANG OF SQUARES

Watch out. Next time you turn a corner, you just might run into a six-foot-tall hipster with a head made of Vespa handlebars.

The cut-outs were commissioned by Toronto-based Canadian Scooter Company to create buzz for the Vespa S model, which is a replica of a '60s Vespa, except the original round headlight and mirrors are now square. The life-like Vespa-heads are decked out in retro-cool attire like Converse and other in-again brands to play on the notion that it's hip to be square.

The unbranded images will be affixed like wallpaper at eye level on buildings around Toronto, Montreal, Calgary and Vancouver. There are four different Vespa-heads in total; they'll appear either as singles or more intimidating "gangs."

"[They're unbranded] to create curiosity and intrigue," says Glen Hunt, creative catalyst at Toronto-based Dentsu Canada, adding that the images were done by Toronto-based street artist Fauxreel. "The idea is to bring something attractive to the locations – it's more like art, so people appreciate it." Hunt describes Faux Reel as "the Banksy of Canada," referring to the renowned British graffiti artist. Street teams will be handing out Vespa-head buttons, too, to further leverage the concept.

Vespa is also working with Toronto-based prodco Crush to do a 40-foot outdoor projection of an interactive Vespa-head that turns around to check out and double-blink at passersby. Print and poster executions will also play on the Vespa-head concept, with headlines like "Born to be Square."

The scooter co is also launching a retro-cool TV spot this spring to push its LX model, featuring a hand-drawn, vintage-looking backdrop. It plays on the insight that Vespas aren't the most macho, performance-driven machines out there, and features a guy who's more artiste than stuntman attempting to jump across a row of cars on his Vespa. He, of course, fails miserably. The next shot features him picking up a beautiful girl to drive home the tagline, delivered by an announcer with an Italian accent: "Vespa, not built for jumping. Vespa, built for love." There are 30- and 45-second versions of the spot, which will run on TV, cinema and online. An online game will play on the spot's concept, in which players can try to make their Vespas jump over things.

advertiser: **Jeremy Logan, VP sales; Jennifer Errico, marketing manager, Canadian Scooter Corp.**  
CDs: **Glen Hunt, Deborah Prenger**  
ADs: **David Glen, Deborah Prenger**  
copywriters: **Glen Hunt, Joe O'Neill**  
interactive CD: **Michael Gramlow**

interactive designer: **Thomas Hong**  
artist: **Fauxreel**  
account services: **Sharon Hill, Natalie Vonlanthen-Choi**  
production manager: **Narine Artinian**  
typographer: **Henry Lee**



## SHREDDIES DON'T WANT TO BE SQUARE ANYMORE

It's all about perspective.

Shreddies, a Toronto-based Kraft Canada brand, is spicing up its square image by cheekily touting itself as diamond-shaped.

"Canadians like Shreddies, but they may have forgotten all about them," says Nancy Vonk, co-CCO at Ogilvy Toronto. "Our goal was to do whatever it takes to make people think about them again."

Shreddies ran a straight-faced test campaign in Alberta last year to see how people would react to "Diamond Shreddies." TV, OOH, online and in-store efforts all treated the diamond product as though it were completely new. The brand began rolling the campaign out across Canada last month, including a limited edition Diamond Shreddies box.

For the national launch, Ogilvy took the joke a step further, and commissioned improv comedian Kerry Griffin to host focus groups for the "new" product.

"We thought the comedy would come from people yelling at us," says Vonk, adding they were surprised that people didn't get the joke right away. "They were all embarrassed [when we told them it wasn't real], but they were all incredibly good sports." Vonk says they're hoping to run an excerpt from one of the faux focus group sessions as a TV spot.

Shreddies will be rolling out a quiz game at diamondshreddies.ca in the near future. The site also houses recipes for Diamond Shreddies, as well as a poll asking if people prefer their Shreddies square or diamond-shaped. At press time, diamond was just beating square.

The diamond concept was the brainchild of Hunter Somerville, who was an intern at Ogilvy at the time. He has since been hired on full-time.

advertiser: **Jennifer Hutchinson**, category business director; **Mangala D'Sa**, brand manager; **Jordon Fietje**, brand manager, Kraft Canada agency: **Ogilvy & Mather** CCOs: **Nancy Vonk**, **Janet Kestin** ACDs: **Ivan Pols**, **Tim Piper**, **Liz Kis**, **Jane Murray**

copywriters: **Hunter Somerville**, **Jen Durning** agency producer: **Shenny Jaffer** print production: **Chris Rozak** account director: **Kristi Karen** prodc: **OPC** director: **Michael Downing** DOP: **Andre Pienaar** editor: **Alison Gordon**, **Relish** sound design: **Vapor Music**

## ALBERTA LIFTS COMMUTERS AWAY

Ever wanted to teleport yourself right out of your morning commute?

Calgary-based Travel Alberta is appealing to grumpy, wistful commuters with a new transit execution that juxtaposes the beautiful Rocky Mountains against the mundane Toronto subway environment. It entails floor and wall decals surrounding platform benches that make them look like part of a ski lift, right down to the "floor skis."

"It works really well within the contrast of the confined space of the subway station. You're hitting the person at a time and a place when they're most likely depressed because they're on their way to work and it's just a horrible commute and everybody's like sheep going through the whole thing," says Jon Mychajlyszyn, CD at Venture Communications' Toronto office. "And then we show them paradise. We're saying, 'Just come and sit in this chair and we'll take you to paradise.'"

The execution is running at eight transit stops around Toronto's downtown core. The main target is ski enthusiasts longing for a winter getaway.

advertiser: **Marney St. John**, director, Americas Leisure Programs, Travel Alberta International agency: **Venture Communications** CD: **Jon Mychajlyszyn** AD: **Brad Van Schaik** client marketing director: **Susan Murphy** photographer: **Jason Stang** post production: **Marcelle Faucher**



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VP marketing  
Andrew Barrett  
and president/CEO  
William Cho have  
found a match for  
the brand in fashion

PHOTO BY PAUL PERRIER



# GLOBAL STYLESETTERS

Life has been good for LG Canada lately. In Q3 of last year, seven years after arriving in Canada, brand awareness for the South Korean manufacturer of glossy red steam washers, sleek HD LCD televisions, condo-friendly fridges and status-symbol cellphones jumped to 40% from 27% the year before. This jump (compared to three points in the U.S.) can be largely attributed to new president and CEO William Cho, who immediately set about shifting the subsidiary's focus from manufacturing and sales to marketing after he joined in January 2006.

◀ By Carey Toane ▶

With 21 years' experience at LG in Europe and the U.S. under his belt, Cho wants to make LG Canada's number one electronics company by 2010. To that end, he has set ambitious annual growth targets of 30% and a revenue target of \$1.1 billion for 2008, up from \$900 million in 2007.

Big carrots call for big sticks, and Cho, who received a global LG Man of the Year award for driving six-fold growth in appliances over two years in Germany, wields an integrated marketing approach that takes its lead from consumer insights. To realize his vision, he wooed VP marketing Andrew Barrett from JWT in October 2006. Barrett, who brings local experience from Molson and P&G, has since grown the marketing team from nine to 16, and will add another nine by the end of the year.

Their signature play is eye-catching visibility via unique events, mass advertising and web initiatives as well as marketplace ubiquity, as they leverage their products' stylish design and energy efficiency in retail partners' efforts. Programs catering global campaigns to local markets run across every consumer touchpoint. "Prior to a year and a half ago, we would have bits of marketing here and there, none of which looked the same," says Barrett.

And it happened fast. Four weeks after joining LG, Barrett launched the Chocolate phone in Canada, "our first attempt to reorient the whole company's approach on marketing." In the process, LG Canada blazed a trail on the branding front for LG global.

The starting point for Chocolate was an insight into consumer behaviour, namely the

"Bragging Bob" type who needs to have the it-phone, whether or not he uses its advanced features – an attitude also applicable to his female counterpart, "Social Sally." This led to a new positioning for LG as the brand for "style-conscious Canadians fascinated by technology," which in turn suggested a natural messaging link with the world of fashion.

The campaign began with a buzz-building exercise in bars and restaurants in Toronto to identify brand ambassadors, who received invitations to the product launch, a fashion show at the Windsor Arms hotel. Post-show, the same nightspots were dominated with Chocolate materials created by LG AOR Y&R's Toronto office, reinforcing the LG buzz brought back by the select few. The initial launch was followed by three more PR-worthy events,

including a runway show at Whistler during the Telus Ski and Snowboard Festival in April 2007, and shows in nightclubs in Toronto and Montreal. Some attendees were flown in after winning an online contest at Lg.ca.

To strengthen LG's fashion orientation and extend it to all product categories, then-LG Canada media AOR MediaEdge partnered with the TV series *Canada's Next Top Model*. In a feat of scene-stealing, LG flat screens, phones and premium appliances like the TV fridge were integrated into all 10 episodes. Toronto-based MindShare, which took over from Mediaedge:cia in January, will carry the partnership into the series' second season.

Flat-screen and HD TVs are also hot right now. The main marketing push is the Red Couch campaign, a global effort consisting of three TV spots produced by Y&R's New York office (which splits the global remit with London). The spots transport a family of HD TV viewers – and their couch – into the fashion show, golf game or bobsled race they're watching, with the tagline, "Don't just watch it, live it." Barrett took the golf execution literally, constructing a golf hole in Montreal during the President's Cup last September and hooking up with Quebec Breakfast Club, which provides breakfast for children in schools, to raise money for the charity and score attention for the line.

## The positioning that we coined a year and a half ago has become the global positioning. We started a big part of it here

Consumers are also upgrading appliances for a variety of feature and style motives, showcased by the marketing. For instance, a contest for the 30" French-door fridge, in which consumers went to Lg.ca to guess the number of bell peppers inside, showcased its capacity. The pepper-stocked fridge appeared on *Breakfast Television* in Vancouver, and broke all records for LG online efforts, raising mailing list subscriptions by 576%.

And by using colours like candy apple red and navy blue and innovative technologies like steam washing that also use less water, even the lowly washing machine is making a fashion statement in LG ads.

Canada's approach aligns with the global mandate to put marketing before manufacturing, as outlined by corporate CEO Yong Nam in January 2007 – one year after Cho initiated the strategy in Canada, and two months after Chocolate. "Many



LG Chocolate models wearing Montreal-based Shan Lingerie and Swimwear gear turn heads in Whistler

other subsidiaries are just starting to get onto that approach, which is why a lot of our best practices are getting picked up," says Barrett, adding that since last fall, unaided brand awareness in Canada has grown to 48%. "We are

We joined Barrett and Cho on the red couch at LG Canada headquarters in Mississauga, Ont., to shine some light on the noise around the brand.

### What were your first impressions of the challenges for LG in Canada?

**William Cho:** LG Canada had good revenue and significant progress, but there was room to improve. So I set out to make our company the leading brand in terms of revenue and market share, as well as make LG a true premium brand in the Canadian marketplace.

Another area was to make this a much stronger marketing company. Although we have great product leadership, our marketing activity was so weak that Canadian consumers perceived LG as a very quiet company.

### Was LG noisier in Europe and the U.S.?

**Cho:** Ten years ago we were not so noisy [anywhere]. But when I first came here, Canada was quieter than other subsidiaries.

**Andrew Barrett:** Outside of Korea, Australia and India, the brand was pretty quiet a few years ago. And then a few geographies started to invest and see some significant change. When Mr. Cho arrived here, LG had been a push-focused company: distribution, get the product on the floors in the stores. It was time to turn it into a pull company.

### Is this push-to-pull shift something you have put into play in other places?

**Cho:** When I started in Germany, I worked as a product manager for home appliances. We

had relatively small revenue and our profitability was low. I started conducting intensive market and consumer insight surveys, and we extended our marketing campaigns together with our retail partners. For example, I created the LG showroom in retail environments. At that time the colour silver was trendy in Germany, so we brought in silver [products] so people could look at and feel this line. With that marketing effort, home appliances occupied 45% of profits of the entire German subsidiary.

Since I laid out our vision for 2010, I have also laid out the five key changes for us to revolutionize this company: sales, marketing, HR, service and infrastructure. Among these, [becoming a] marketing-oriented company is one of the most important. I put all the marketing personnel into one department. This creates a synergy path to make sure the brand identity has the marketing efficiencies. Then we can have one consistent message, as well as selective push marketing, driven by pull marketing, with our retail partners.

#### **Is Canada a model for LG subsidiaries because of its growth?**

**Cho:** I think so. We have created the best practices, from Andrew's leadership and our communication [method], the integrated marketing approach, to consumer insight-led marketing communications and moment-of-truth enhancement through the online and retail collaborations.



A pair of Shine phones encrusted with \$30,000 of diamonds gathers a crowd

#### **Can you elaborate on this approach?**

**Cho:** Let me take the example of the Shine phone. First of all, we did the segmentation work in mobile devices, which can be grouped by six or seven different segmentations. We found that "Bragging Bob," one of these segmentations, is our target consumer. We found that the USP [was] not only style but also technology, such as the two-megapixel camera and video telephony. Combining this target segmentation with the USPs the target likes, we tested and modified the global ad, which was developed in Europe, [to include] technology and male taste. Then we tested this modified global ad and proved the point.

With this proven record, we approached the program, which touches every consumer touchpoint from TV to PR and events and online and point of purchase sales in the retail experience. We use the TV as an awareness enhancement. We use online and PR to drive the consideration set, and we use our POP and in-store activities to improve purchasing stages.

#### **What part does consumer behaviour play in your growth?**

**Cho:** Obviously, the flat-screen TV market is growing exponentially. The consumer tends to upgrade home appliances with a "trade-up"

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Quebec Breakfast Club founder Daniel Germain tees off at the LG Open in Montreal

tendency, and with evolving mobile phone technology we see a lot of opportunities too. Although [the sector] has been struggling a little bit, I see a lot of growth potential in notebooks. Our product portfolio, [split] 30/30/30 into mobile, appliances and consumer electronics/IT, will [meet] this growing potential.

**Barrett:** We spend a lot of time understanding consumer behaviour and letting it lead our activity. Two years ago, our market research budget was zero. This past year we spent \$0.5 to \$0.75 million in market research. In 2008 we'll spend in excess of \$2 million.

We're [also] spending time in consumers' homes. Whenever our global CEO comes to a city, the first thing he does is go on three home visits. Our whole company's making this transformation.

**Cho:** All managers pay at least two store visits per month, to see consumers' behavior and what's going on in the field. All of us are working as marketing people, giving input to marketing initiatives. Even the service department is an important marketing tool. When they get angry calls from consumers, there is an opportunity to calm this voice into an opportunity for the next purchase.

**Why do you grant your VPs so much autonomy?**

**Cho:** The autonomy is key to implementing the marketing strategy. We align with each other in terms of strategy. Implementation, how to deal with those marketing initiatives, is all on Andrew. He has much more local expertise than me. So that is all about autonomy and empowerment.

**Who are your most important partners in Canada?**

**Cho:** Rather than who we are partnering with, I believe how deeply we are partnering is more important. I go to partnership meetings with all the major retailers and talk about how deeply we're engaged in marketing activities. We talk about our key performance indicators, the in-store market-share target in particular, the model mix and, from our side, how much marketing support is needed for them to sell more product.

[The carriers] like to realize their service roadmap in our product roadmap. So it is always successful if we align our product roadmap down the road two or three years to their service roadmap. That is the perfect harmony.

**How does your philosophy of "fast innovation, fast growth" translate into your marketing strategy?**

**Barrett:** When a new technology comes out, we do the marketing in a very big way, and we do it very fast.

We choose the vehicles based on where consumers are making their decisions. We know that about 60% of consumers go to the manufacturer's website before they go to a store. So we have to be heavy online. We also know that we can develop competitive advantage in what we do there.



We do PR and big events because the consumer is looking for third parties to make endorsements or recommendations on technology. So we have to do events to get the appropriate attention for the brand.

The other thing we've consciously chosen on every marketing program we launch is to do something that's never been done before – in our industry, ideally, and in Canada, most likely. That obviously leads you into things like online and events – I don't think anyone in Canada has built a 70-yard golf hole in the downtown of a city before. Events are a way to do things that people notice. It's a lot harder to be innovative with a TV ad.

**Is experiential an opportunity for some uniquely Canadian marketing within a global campaign?**

**Barrett:** Yes. In all of the marketing that we've done, I would say 15% has been global pickup and 85% has been domestically created. We sometimes get assets globally that we can leverage, but, for example, the Shine phone went into Europe 10 or 11 months before it came to Canada, so we had to decide when the right time was for our market and how to make a big deal of it. The Shine phone had a "Born to Shine" tagline, we took that. We took a spinning phone from another part of the world

to put on our website and built everything else uniquely for here. Red Couch came with three commercials, and all the online stuff and events we did locally.

**How do you decide when to pull out all the stops for a product, and is there any limit to how big it can go?**

**Barrett:** When I started here, we were a 12-week marketer, and we need to become a 52-week marketer. Much like the restaurant business, we have 13 four-week periods a year. We need to do something significant in every one of those periods. I sit down at the beginning of the year and figure out what key technologies we're going to be launching through the year, when the key seasonal peaks are. Then it's timing,

and we do a bunch of quick research to figure out where we think we've got a consumer wow, and if it's there, then we build a program. We could build a big program on anything.

### How in sync is it with the U.S. launches?

**Barrett:** TVs will be similar. Appliances' seasonality is different because the U.S. gets warmer sooner than Canada, so spring cleaning tends to happen a bit later here, and the air conditioner business happens a little bit later.

Cellphones we'll often lead. The things we did on Chocolate and Shine were ahead of the U.S. We're bringing touchphones to Canada in a huge way April 1, across many cellphone models at all of our carrier partners. We'll be ahead of the U.S. on those, because clients like Rogers are ahead of U.S. cellphone carriers.

### What's your biggest challenge right now?

**Cho:** [Due to] the big growth, we should have built our warehouse capacity a bit earlier. And our service infrastructure: we get a lot of calls when we sell out of a lot of products.

Another is managing the company culture. Since we've grown so fast, some areas are going through growing pains. I have hired more than 120 people [out of a total 270 employees] since I joined. I have to manage the existing culture and the incoming cultures, and [develop a] marketing-oriented mindset.

### What are you doing to build employee engagement?

**Barrett:** Mr. Cho wanted me to make the brand as noisy inside the building as outside. We've added new employees who knew almost nothing about LG when they joined. We had to get people to believe we're going to be number one by 2010. So we had to create a lot of internal momentum.

Every single program that we took to market, we took internally with the same level of vigour. So when we did our "Show us your



Washroom creative catered to audience gender

set" promotion, [in which] someone could submit to win a TV based on showing us their dilapidated old TV set, we had all the employees engaged with a website. They were reviewing the submissions and voting on the top 10 sets of the week posted on our website. By participating in that program, they got a ballot in a draw to win their own TV set. We did the same thing with Shine phone, and we set the pepper fridge promotion up here in our lobby and on our website internally; you could try to figure out how many peppers were in the fridge and you had a chance to win just like a consumer out in the marketplace.

That got noise internally, and it made every employee feel like they knew what every program

was going on in the field. Now, when you walk through the building, everyone talks about the programs; everyone feels like marketers.

### How are you communicating your environmental positioning?

**Barrett:** Our focus is on building technology that uses less energy and at the same time gives superior performance. We communicate that through our website, in terms of the Energy Star ratings and other product functionality. [Public affairs manager Frank Lee] spends a fair amount of time talking about that. It's a good proof point as to the superior technology in our product. A direct-drive motor eliminates the need for belts and hoses, therefore you can turn the drum more easily, therefore you need less water, less electricity. We're in the process of working on how we're going to make that a larger part of our communication.

**Cho:** Hopefully we can use our tagline "Life's good" as "Life's green."

### What's the next big opportunity?

**Cho:** I see a lot of opportunity in all of our product businesses. We can expand our presence where we have not been engaged, for example, in the [hotel] lodging business and commercial areas like retail signage, the [residential condo development] market. As well as some areas which are still invisible, like business opportunities in HVAC [heating, ventilation and air conditioning].

We live in a connected world. Considering the coming convergences, since we build all our products, and we are strong in appliances and consumer electronics and mobile communications, we can be a total solution. ■



# SEARCHING FOR RESULTS:

In the June issue of **Strategy** we'll be publishing a supplement that will talk to the value of integrating search engine marketing into the MARCOM mix. Search users are actively seeking information and want to be driven to its source. In this supplement, search engines will be able to speak to how they can contribute to business growth and how to track ROI.

The issue includes bonus distribution at the **Search Engine Strategies Conference & Expo 2007**, on June 17 and 18.

For more information, please contact Carrie Gillis at 416-408-2300 ext. 301 or [carrie@strategy.brunico.com](mailto:carrie@strategy.brunico.com)

SEM strategies deliver ROI



Micki Rivers knows how to build street cred. The senior marketing manager at Concord, Ont.-based Adidas Canada is a longtime buzz-builder who realized early on in her career that allowing consumers to find her brands themselves goes a long way towards building brand loyalty.

Rivers wears many hats at Adidas – from managing the Originals and women's wear lines to coordinating PR events to developing relationships with retailers – but her focus on buzz building is consistent across everything she does. Her tactics must be working: Originals is worn by rock stars and skate kids, and the women's apparel is regularly featured in fashion mags.

Rivers is set to turn a lot of heads this month with a fresh Canadian activation of the global Adidas Grün (German for green) campaign. She'll be setting up in-store horticultural displays in the windows of 10 of her key accounts, ideally within close range of each other for maximum impact. At press time, she was aiming to do five along Toronto's trendy Queen West. The displays will include living

# MAINTAINING THE NOISE

Adidas Canada's Micki Rivers gets the right people wearing her brand – and everyone else talking about it ◀ By Annette Bourdeau ▶

plants, so Rivers is hiring a horticultural company to maintain the window displays throughout April. The effort coincides with Earth Day on Apr. 27. While there are many global Adidas initiatives this year, Rivers chose to really focus on Grün here because it's close to her heart. "I really believe [the environment] is an important issue," she says. "I drive a hybrid."

April is a busy month for Rivers. She'll be in Calgary for the Junos on Apr. 6, hanging out at the Adidas-sponsored "shoe-shine stand" at the official Junos musician hangout, dubbed the Rock Star Hotel. Rivers loves getting her product onto musicians who already wear Adidas, and having a presence at the Junos is a good way to meet lots of artists at once. "It hooks you up for future sponsorship opportunities," she says. Adidas is currently sponsoring artists like Bedouin Soundclash, Jilly Black, Shout Out Out Out and Hedley. She won't sponsor just anyone, though: the artists have to demonstrate that they already

**The artists have to show that they already like Adidas – she doesn't want them wearing it just because it's part of a deal**

like Adidas first – she doesn't want them wearing it just because it's part of a deal.

When Bedouin Soundclash's management approached her, they sent a music video in which the lead singer was wearing an old Adidas Originals T-shirt. That won Rivers over right away. Now, she sets them up with free product and modest financial support, and in exchange, the band members wear Adidas in public and

in promotional images and videos. Adidas also sponsors the band's launch parties and provides gift bags for attendees, which lands the brand in the hands of even more key influencers.

Rivers' experience working with those influencers and early adopters is serving her well in her efforts to reach out to skateboarders. It's been a big focus for her since Adidas launched a skatewear line about two years ago. She's very careful not to alienate her target; you won't catch any Adidas skatewear advertised outside of a niche skate publication. Rivers is the first to admit when she's out of her element. As a suburban mom, she knows she's not in a skater's mindset, so she enlisted help.



"I hired a cool niche company that lives and breathes skate," she says, referring to Toronto-based agency Breadwinner. She worked with them to select the top five or six amateur skateboarders across Canada for the brand to sponsor as part of the Adidas Flow team. Rivers' goal for the team is the ultimate buzz coup: for the team to land coverage in Canadian skate bible *SBC Skateboard*.

Rivers is also leveraging the Flow team concept with independent retailers. She set up the Shop Flow Kids program, which involves sending free Adidas product to one employee at the most underground skate shops Adidas sells into across Canada. Rivers says she has about 20 Shop Flow Kids in total, from Underworld in Vancouver to Blue Tile Lounge in Newmarket, Ont. She often receives feedback from the kids.



Rivers makes sure bands like Hedley are well stocked with Adidas gear

"When you deliver product, it's interesting how often they email back and say they love the shoes," says Rivers.

This spring, as well as appealing to skaters and rockers, Rivers will be appealing to a target she's a bit more familiar with: runners. She's orchestrating an account-specific promo with Calgary-based Forzani Group to set up a giant shoebox just outside the mall entrances of Sport Chek stores. The box opens up into a little room, where runners can try on Adidas running shoes and chat with sales reps who can provide them with customized running routes around their homes using satellite technology. Rivers, who's a runner herself, says it's important to give runners added value like the maps, since a lot of marketers are talking to this increasingly lucrative demo. "There's a 40% growth in running," she points out.

Rivers is no stranger to unique in-store initiatives. After earning a general studies degree from the University of Manitoba (she hails from rural Manitoba) and a PR diploma from Toronto's Humber College, she began her career specializing in POS and in-store design, before moving to the marketing department at Aurora, Ont.-based Reebok Canada in 1995.

While she was a marketing manager, Rivers was put in touch with record label rep Craig Mannix, who was representing rapper Choclair at the time. Rivers saw an opportunity to reach a new audience for Reebok, and pushed hard to launch a new shoe with an urban tie-in, which Choclair would wear. She faced a lot of internal resistance, but eventually won approval to test the new shoe. It wound up netting a double-digit sell-through. "Once you get sell-through, then

they start looking at it saying, 'Hmm, there's some legitimacy there,'" says Rivers.

In 2005, Adidas bought Reebok, and invited Rivers (who was director of marketing at the time) to stay on to work for them. Rivers saw it as an exciting opportunity. "At Reebok, as marketing director I oversaw all categories. At Adidas, I wanted to be tactical again. A full-term project is very rewarding," she says.

One of Rivers' more tactical moves for Adidas has proven to be very rewarding: she set up a PR tour that showcases all the new Adidas lines to media twice a year. This has helped score regular media coverage in magazines like *Lou Lou* and *Fashion*, which has impressed higher-ups like her boss Jeff Cooper, director of marketing at Adidas Canada.

"The biggest thing for us is that she's established a very strong PR program," he says, adding that Rivers is always busy maintaining relationships with not only the media, but also key influencers and retailers. As well as being a key liaison for the shops Adidas sells into nationwide, Rivers was also instrumental in planning the launch activities surrounding the openings of the three Canadian Adidas Originals stores over the past couple of years in Vancouver, Toronto and Montreal. Cooper marvels at Rivers' ability to stay on top of so many different projects. "Micki's always flying in, flying out, flying everywhere," he says. "She's very high-energy. And she's always smiling."

Rivers will be focusing her energy more heavily online this spring. She's currently working with Toronto-based Vice Canada on housing a few global Adidas videos, like a claymation history of founder Adi Dassler, on

the Vice video site vbs.tv. "What I love about online is that it's measurable," she says, adding that she plans to drive traffic to the videos with banner ads. Don't expect to see Adidas on Facebook anytime soon, though. "I don't know how I feel about [advertising on] Facebook, because it's very personal."

If you're ever looking for her, chances are you'll catch Rivers jogging in her Adidas sneakers, chatting with kids at skateparks, mingling with rockers at concerts or hanging out at an independent Queen West boutique. She'll be the one decked out in Adidas, because, as boss Cooper says: "Micki lives the brand." ■

**Favourite current TV show?**  
I watched the first segment of *Rock of Love* with Bret Michaels. I laughed and laughed – it was outrageously bad! It's so bad I want to watch it again. The women were the worst!

**Reality show you'd most like to be on?**  
How about the one I wouldn't want to be on: *The Amazing Race*. I am stressed out everytime I watch it, since I can get lost in an elevator – pretty sad! I am just not wired for north, south, east or west.

**Favourite vacation spot?**  
Mayan Riviera. I think I'm going to retire there and live in a fishing hut surrounded by all my eccentric friends! I hope I can live a long time on Mexican beer and nachos.

**First job?**  
I lived in the Prairies (somewhat remote) and my brother and I had a trap line – no kidding! We were eight and nine years old. My dad showed us how to manage the line and we traded our product into the local fur trader. Today you wouldn't catch me in anything with fur, but it was what it was in those days.

**Favourite way to unwind?**  
I am a marathon runner and I really enjoy my long runs with my club on Sundays (I know, sick!). I am also in the process of purchasing a vintage Vespa, but I have to get my motorcycle licence, which should be interesting.

## FIVE QUESTIONS

# NUTRISYSTEM ZEROES IN ON BLOGGERS

◀ By Annette Bourdeau ▶

## When diet brand NutriSystem launched in Canada

last December, it opted to use social media to augment PR tactics and ads adapted from its global HQ in Horsham, PA. Mississauga, Ont.-based NutriSystem Canada enlisted Toronto Web 2.0 boutique Com.motion (a unit of PR firm Veritas Communications) to give cyber social butterflies all the info and tools they need to share their "find" with others. Com.motion invited bloggers to test-drive NutriSystem and document their experience in their blogs.

"Although a blogger may not have the audience a traditional journalist has, they're an important part of the mix. When people type NutriSystem into Google [they often find blog entries first]," explains Keith McArthur, Com.motion principal and senior director, media innovation at Veritas, who says they opted to set up a separate site for the release so bloggers have everything they need, without having to navigate through the homepage.

NutriSystem.comestocanada.ca includes a fact sheet, "share" buttons to post on Facebook and del.icio.us and downloadable photos and videos. At press time, blogs like Bargainista and I like to cook had begun writing about their NutriSystem tests.

We asked two social media experts, **Janice Diner**, GM/CD of Toronto-based Ripple Social Media (launched by Sharpe Blackmore Euro RSCG), and **Ian Barnett**, VP business development at Toronto-based agency Spider Marketing Solutions, to weigh in.



### CONCEPT

**Diner:** Kudos to Com.motion for helping move the needle towards full adoption of social media tools. This is a great example of a social media release, the new PR format that all should follow. Having a social media release to support (or launch) this initiative is a perfect way to get the word out to the news media and bloggers. It provides the right tools in the right way.



**Barnett:** I might be missing something, but why a separate, practically unbranded site/release that contains a fraction of the information on the product itself? Nutrisystem.ca is pretty good, so why not just add social media tools there and send a release driving people to it?

**nutrisystem**



Pre-NutriSystem: 196 pounds

With NutriSystem: 160 pounds  
**Carol Prinn**

## "SHARE" OPTIONS: IS THE INFO APPROPRIATE FOR EACH NETWORK?

**Diner:** Without question. It provides the ability to share information on a variety of networks in an effective manner. Take note. This is how you do it.

**Barnett:** It is getting easier to create content specific to networks simply because the networks have attracted huge, diverse groups. Coca-Cola did a great job by posting their The Coke Side of Life spoof ad of *Grand Theft Auto*, "Coke GTA," on YouTube. It really fit the network and has over three million views. But as networks like Facebook grow beyond control and lose that specific target...suddenly the content doesn't need to be as relevant to just the network. So will someone post this content? Sure. Probably the same person that keeps sending me pictures of cats.

### The creds

#### NutriSystem Canada

Lou Carsley, GM

#### Veritas Communications/Com.motion

Keith McArthur, senior director, media innovation; Brenna Flynn, Com.motion coordinator; Karen Cleveland, senior consultant

### TOOLS AVAILABLE

**Diner:** It's easy to read and navigate and takes advantage of some of the multimedia tools firms can utilize.

**Barnett:** The easiest and best free tool is found at addthis.com. It's a button that can be applied to any page easily, that lets the user select which social media sites they want to attach the content to. I just don't see why sites/this release would add three or four different tools when this one tool covers pretty much everything. Sure, there is one extra click, but then it reveals so much choice and it is simple to use!

**Bargainista**  
...where people who love shopping connect.

Thursday, February 14, 2008  
Wrapping up week 1 on NutriSystem  
Week 1  
+ Tamzin - no change  
+ Eden - about 2 pounds  
This week Tamzin shares her experiences from week 1 of the NutriSystem Challenge...  
Well, the NutriSystem Challenge has certainly turned my regular meals into a challenge. I'm hardly having the portable entrance, but a lot of a challenge to plan interesting choices for the salads, proteins, and fat servings ahead of time. I have a pretty good attitude, as it is taking me some practice and a little imagination.  
This week has been a bit of a challenge making and trying to remember to fill my water bottle at every opportunity. How did I do in week 1? Well, I must come clean with some dimensions: I prepared meals of homemade salads on Friday and Saturday, and I had to eat out on Sunday. I did not eat out on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, and had only 1 meal. The NutriSystem挑战 gives you tips on what to order or avoid at different types of restaurants, but I know to back away from the butter chicken.  
I have been eating a dinner salad for lunch and a lunch salad for dinner, mostly because I love the hunger pangs at 3pm and eat better for my schedule. While I haven't tried everything yet, I have

### BLOG COVERAGE TO DATE

**Diner:** The Bargainista's NutriSystem Challenge [in which readers could win a free product trial] was a great idea, but at the end of the day, it was a one-week contest that generated nine entries and two posts. I'm sure there's a left-brainer out there somewhere mumbling the letters "ROI."

**Barnett:** I tried to find a disclaimer somewhere that explained NutriSystem's involvement, but couldn't find it. This is a pretty hot topic and the credibility of a lot of people and agencies has been affected by flogs. The content sounds too pretty. [Editor's note: while bloggers weren't paid by NutriSystem, they were provided with free trials of the product.]

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# Mmm, tasty ads...

◀ By Annette Bourdeau ▶

The latest print ad for Welch's grape juice is good enough to eat.

The juice brand (owned by Concord, MA.-based Welch Foods) used "Peel 'n Taste" edible strips by Bala Cynwyd, PA.-based First Flavor in a print effort that recently ran in five million copies of *People* magazine.

The simple ad features a Welch's bottle with a glass of juice beside it. The line "For a tasty fact, remove & lick" appears above the glass, which doubles as a pouch holding a "taste strip." This reporter tried said strips, and was surprised by how much they taste like the actual product.

"Welch's is using First Flavor to differentiate and generate buzz," explains Jay Minkoff, president and CEO of First Flavor. The ploy seems to be working: it landed coverage by the likes of *Good Morning America*, *The Today Show* and the *Wall Street Journal*, among others.

Princeton, NJ.-based Church & Dwight used the strips for a POS effort last fall to promote its Arm & Hammer toothpaste, with shelf dispensers holding flyers with affixed taste strips. The effort led to a sales spike of 19% at a time when its competitors Crest and Colgate were doing price promotions.

And for those who like to watch what they eat (or are leery of eating things found in magazines), First Flavor has a consumer-facing



site, [peelntaste.com](http://peelntaste.com), with information about what's in the strips.

First Flavor recently hired a Toronto-based sales rep to focus on building its Canadian business. The taste strips are available for 50 cents per unit for orders of 100,000 to one million, while over a million range between 11.5 to 15 cents per unit. [www.firstflavor.com](http://www.firstflavor.com)

## Math takes the guesswork out of marketing

What if cashiers wore burgundy smocks instead of plum? Would sales increase if the font on signage were bigger? What if stores smelled different?

Improving in-store sales isn't an exact science: that's where a little math can help. A formula used by Knoxville-based consulting firm QualPro, called multivariable testing (MVT), allows marketers to test as many as 40 different variables at the same time. QualPro uses the formula to identify which elements are boosting sales, and which are actually doing more harm than good.

David Cochran, VP operations at QualPro, says data from more than 150,000 ideas tested with MVT shows that about 25% of the ideas companies implement to improve sales work, while 22% cause damage and 53% make no difference.

The formula can also be applied to other categories to gauge efficiency and DM variables. Clients include Pacific Bell (AT&T), American Express, Staples, Circuit City and Progressive Insurance.

"It's focused on creating breakthroughs," says Cochran. MVT recently helped Wayne, NJ.-based Toys"R"Us unearth a somewhat bizarre

breakthrough. An employee suggested that Babies"R"Us stores try using aromatherapy to boost sales. Executives laughed at first, but since they were able to test so many variables, decided to throw it in the mix. Lavender-scented plugs were found to boost sales by a "significant" amount.

QualPro engages executives, sales associates and agency partners to determine which variables to test. "It's common to have hundreds of ideas on the table," says Cochran. From there, they choose the most practical, and create "recipes." Each includes about half of the ideas, and the combinations are tested randomly at different stores. If there are 30 ideas being tested, there will be 32 different recipes. QualPro then uses mathematics to "statistically untangle" each variable's impact on sales. "It takes the guesswork out of executive decision-making," says Cochran.

QualPro, which can take on Canadian clients, charges from US\$300,000 to US\$1 million. Cochran says they won't take on a project unless they see the potential for an ROI of at least five times the cost in a year. [www.qualproinc.com](http://www.qualproinc.com) **AB**

# 65.8

◀ By Mike Farrell ▶

That's the percentage of 14- to 34-year-olds in Canada who provided top-box agreement (4 or 5 on a scale of 1 to 5) to the statement: "People place too much importance on brands." So what's up?

The idea of brands has always been a moving target. The public's interest in, and support of, brands waxes and wanes based on consumer confidence, faith in corporate structure, sense of self and so on. Given their increasing control of media, culture and, in turn, brands, this is particularly true for younger Canadians.

Though still an important consumer cue, brands are not the juggernauts they used to be. Like the demystification of celebrity, brands are more openly understood by young adults as illusory and fabricated.

So brands are now accountable to, and driven by, the very consumers they're trying to attract. You only have to look at the new consumer-sourced "brands" (Nvohk clothing, SellaBand) to see how people are starting to take matters into their own hands when they see a vacuum, smell an opportunity and reap some sort of cultural or consumerist reward.

It's time for a brand relevance audit to look at every single layer of interaction, find any gaps and start working to fill them for the future. These new perceptions of brands are only going to change and get stronger as young consumers mature.

*This "statsthought" was gleaned from Ping, Youthography's quarterly national study of Canadians aged 9 to 34. It was culled from a survey in fall 2007 responded to by 1,546 14- to 34-year-olds, regionally represented. Mike Farrell (partner, chief strategic officer) can be reached at [mike@youthography.com](mailto:mike@youthography.com).*

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# MEDIA DECONSTRUCTED 2

## The creative edge

The second installment of *strategy's* top media plan roundup places the spotlight on the creative side. When we asked media agencies to send us their best cases, we received the most entries in this, our final category: Media as Creative Department. Read on to see how advertisers and media agencies collaborated on creative executions that stretched boundaries, invaded airspace and even bled through the pages of a magazine.

### Night moves

The launch of the redesigned BMW Mini required an idea that set the product apart in a highly cluttered automotive market. Toronto-based The Media Company (TMC) devised an eye-catching guerrilla approach that (cheekily) fit the bill.



Strategically placed Night Projections generated relevant exposure and press for the BMW Mini

#### Goal

To create buzz among young male drivers.

#### Target

Extroverted, risk-taking non-conformists who love to challenge the status quo.

#### Insights and strategy

For the 2007 Mini launch, Whitby, Ont.-based BMW wanted an edgy medium to appeal to the target. TMC recommended a media environment that married the product's style and manoeuvrability with the cheeky brand personality and the target's lifestyle, and Toronto's Taxi2 came up with the creative.

#### The plan

BMW Mini was the first advertiser to use Langley, B.C.-based The Media Merchants' Night Projections solution in the highly regulated OOH market in Vancouver, and the concept was extended to other major markets, including Toronto. The medium uses movie technology to project huge colour ads onto the blank sides of buildings in areas where the target audience socializes, generating more relevant exposure than static signage, especially when parked vehicles were integrated into the execution. And the (mistaken) perception of breaking city bylaws relating to billboards reflects the mindset of the target.

#### Results

Coverage by consumer media, such as the *Vancouver Sun*, and inquiries by other outdoor media vendors in Vancouver about adapting the technology for other clients. As well, sales exceeded targets.

#### Credits

**TMC:** Jack Wu, account director, media planning and execution

**BMW:** Marc Belcourt, Mini brand communications manager



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## Saturating the medium

The anticipated launch of Mazola cooking spray and Becel non-aerosol spray in the Canadian marketplace threatened Pam's leadership in the category. Previously, competition was from private label sprays or butter and oil. So Starcom Toronto and Leo Burnett came up with a print execution that brought home the benefits of Pam in a very absorbing way.



Print ads used the gross-out reaction to grease to portray Pam as a healthier alternative

### Goal

Mississauga, Ont.-based ConAgra Foods Canada wanted to defend against new competitors, and grow household penetration of Pam by convincing new users to try it and bringing former users back. Pam is known as the "no-stick" spray, but with new competition offering the same feature, the Starcom-Burnett team had to differentiate it as a healthy, natural product.

### Target

Busy moms.

### Insights and strategy

Consumers are increasingly seeking healthier food choices. The

team wanted to leverage the insight that people are "grossed out" by excess oil on a plate, napkin or pan. The idea was to portray Pam as the trusted, healthier, less greasy alternative to oil or butter via a product demo that connected the consumer from the advertising right into relevant editorial.

### The plan

The Leo Burnett creative team created an ad bleeding a grease spot through the page (for the first time in Canada) and into editorial sections in Transcontinental publications like the December 2006 and March 2007 issues of *Canadian Living*.

### Results

Ad recall and purchase intent were double that of two competitive brands in the same issue. Over 90% of readers felt Pam was a healthier cooking option after seeing the ad.

### Credits

**Starcom:** John Ware, strategy director; Jennifer Bell, strategy supervisor; Emily Strongitharm, strategy planner

**ConAgra Foods:** Jason Quehl, sr. brand manager

**Leo Burnett:** Kelly Zettel, CD; Chris Cousineau, AD; Michael Takasaki, copywriter

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# Hockey's summer shift

CTVglobemedia's TSN broadcast an eight-game Canada vs. Russia Super Series over two weeks last fall with some of hockey's fastest and most intense next-generation players. Toronto-based Cossette Media took advantage of the excitement to get Thornhill, Ont.-based Nike Canada in the faces of young hockey fans and generate interest in Nike's summer training program.



Inspirational films of hockey players getting ready for action encouraged kids to sign up for summer training

## Goal

To encourage young hockey players to sign up for Nike's training regime, The Summer Shift.

## Target

Hockey-crazed kids, primarily boys 10 to 16.

## Insights and strategy

To get ahead in today's fast and physical hockey game, players need to train more than their peers, pushing their limits even in the off season to fulfill their true potential on the ice. In order to inspire the next

generation, Nike needed to showcase not only how today's star players train, but how their motivation paid off when it mattered.

## The plan

To inject the Nike Summer Shift message into the game broadcasts, the team tapped TSN anchors to throw a short film created by Portland, Ore.'s Wieden+Kennedy to document the training regimes of Canadian players during each game. The producers wrote intros and outros, inserting the content into their analysis between the first and

second periods. The films were also screened at rinks and arenas. The team then took the strategy online to TSN's broadband player and created a Nike Summer Shift section where young players could watch the training content, along with the live action on the ice.

## Results

With Canada sweeping the series, the audience was 39% higher than estimated. And nearly 7,000 kids enrolled at niketraining.ca to build their own training programs.

## Credits

**Cossette Media:** Brock Leeson, media supervisor; Kate Clement, buyer

**Nike Canada:** Andrew Stewart, brand communications manager

**Wieden+Kennedy:** Matthew Hernholm, account executive



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## CLARIFICATION

In last month's Media Deconstructed feature, credit for the Sprite/Quiksilver wild posting campaign was mistakenly given to Pattison and CBS Outdoor (who were involved in the more traditional OOH campaign element). In fact, Grassroots Advertising of Toronto was responsible for developing the campaign with Cossette, and for installing and maintaining the innovative postings, which incorporated steal-able clothes. *Strategy* regrets the error.

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- **John Furlong**, **CEO of VANOC**, will provide the ultimate insider's preview of the **Vancouver 2010 Winter Games**.
- **Scotiabank's Jim Tobin** will shed light on the out-of-the-box thinking that led to the wildly popular **Scotiabank Nuit Blanche**.
- **Scott Smith** from **Hockey Canada** will explore the enduring sponsorship draw of **Canada's national game**.
- **Derrick Ross** from **S.L. Feldman & Associates** will sound out the opportunities inherent in **Music Sponsorship**.



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# Cryo conspiracy

When Calgary-based Imperial Oil launched a new slushie drink, Cryo, at its Esso gas stations across the country, Toronto-based OMD Canada stepped up to the challenge with disruptive, cryptic media – and by partnering with Toronto-based YTV, they got teens embroiled in TV and web intrigue.

## Goal

To engage youth with an interactive and targeted multimedia campaign.

## Target

Teens 12 to 17.

## Insights and strategy

Teenagers wish for exhilarating experiences to transform their highly structured lives. To help them escape from the mundane and to launch the new Cryo beverage, the team devised disruptive communications that fed into teenagers' desire to be actively involved in the thrill of action, discovery and intrigue.

## The plan

Working with Corus Entertainment's YTV, the team created a "conspiracy theory" storyline in which television and the web were used to engage the target. Teens were driven to "Uncover the Truth" about the new product through an intricate storyline, unfolded via the first ever isolated commercial placements that interrupted programming on YTV last May, mimicking a rogue broadcast. Investigative youth were driven to three microsites posted by three main characters to explain their versions of the story.

Like real undercover agents, teens were able to hack emails and access top-secret data.

## Results

Site traffic was 46% higher than YTV benchmarks, while clickthrough rates exceeded average industry rates by 85%. The time spent per session was 80% higher than average promotions. In the launch month ending in June, sales exceeded goals by 25%. As well, there was lots of online chatter on various forums.

## Credits

**OMD:** Bita Fesharaki, strategy manager; Raquel Mullin, media supervisor; Laura Chiaravalloti, strategist

**Imperial Oil:** Carla M. Whitehurst, convenience retailing client advisor; Don Rudzinski, brand communication, Americas



A conspiracy theory storyline creates buzz for the Cryo slushie

**Corus:** Colleen Kennedy, account executive; Tom Woyzbun, co-marketing project manager



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# Wii is smarter than a 5th grader

When Vancouver-based Nintendo of Canada was launching a new game for its Wii console, *Big Brain Academy: Wii Degree*, they wanted to market to families with kids – whether they were current gamers or not. So Starcom Toronto teamed up with CanWest to turn couch potatoes into gamers via an educational, fun property designed to overcome the notion that video gaming is bad for one's brain health. Learning? To woo new gamers, hook up with a TV show.

## Goal

To build awareness for *Big Brain Academy: Wii Degree* and drive interest and purchase intent.

## Target

Families with kids 9 to 12.

## Insights and strategy

The notion of "if they try it, they will buy it" seemed to resonate with the Wii, so the execution needed to be as experiential as possible. Starcom partnered with Toronto-based CanWest MediaWorks to bring the program *Are You Smarter Than a 5th Grader?* to Canada, as they felt the U.S. show would be the ideal vehicle to demonstrate the educational value of gaming. *Big Brain Academy* was connected throughout the entire process of putting together *Are You Smarter Than a Canadian 5th Grader* – from the Canada-wide casting tour to the pre-promotion, the announcement of the winning contestants and in all episodes.

## The plan

In August, prior to the registration opening, Wiis with *Big Brain Academy* were given away on radio stations in five major cities. Working with Toronto-based Inventia, Starcom negotiated



*Big Brain Academy* was integrated into *Are You Smarter Than a Canadian 5th Grader?*

to have a *Big Brain Academy* Training Zone included in the registration process so kids could warm up their brains with the game before their auditions.

Wiis were also given to the winning contestants on Sept. 25. On the *Canadian 5th Grader* website, profiles of each child were posted with accompanying Mii avatar designs with their "brain weights." During the show, when a contestant reached the \$25,000 *Big Brain Academy* Question, a *Big Brain Academy* logo appeared on screen.

As well, in the *Big Brain Academy* Challenge genre of the day, an announcer invited players at home to text in their answers for a chance

to win a Wii package and a vacation for four. Supporting 30-second spots were placed within each episode as well as on the microsite, plus banner ads and pre-promo spots.

## Results

*Big Brain Academy* site traffic more than doubled (+124%) on the Thursday night premiere vs. the Thursday a week prior. Most importantly, between the first and third weeks of October, sales results doubled. Press coverage also exceeded expectations.

## Credits

**Starcom Toronto:** Shauna Chan, strategy director; Steve Aronovitch, broadcast investment manager

**Nintendo of Canada:** John Azevedo, senior manager, consumer marketing; Jocelyne Doyon, brand coordinator

**CanWest:** Gaye McDonald, VP marketing ventures/brand partnership; Annamaria Howard, PM; Sean O'Donoghue, specialist

**Inventa:** Alexa Freudigmann, director; Richard Weins, client manager



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"Making it easy for marketers and media planners is what it's all about" - John Hinds

# Community Newspapers

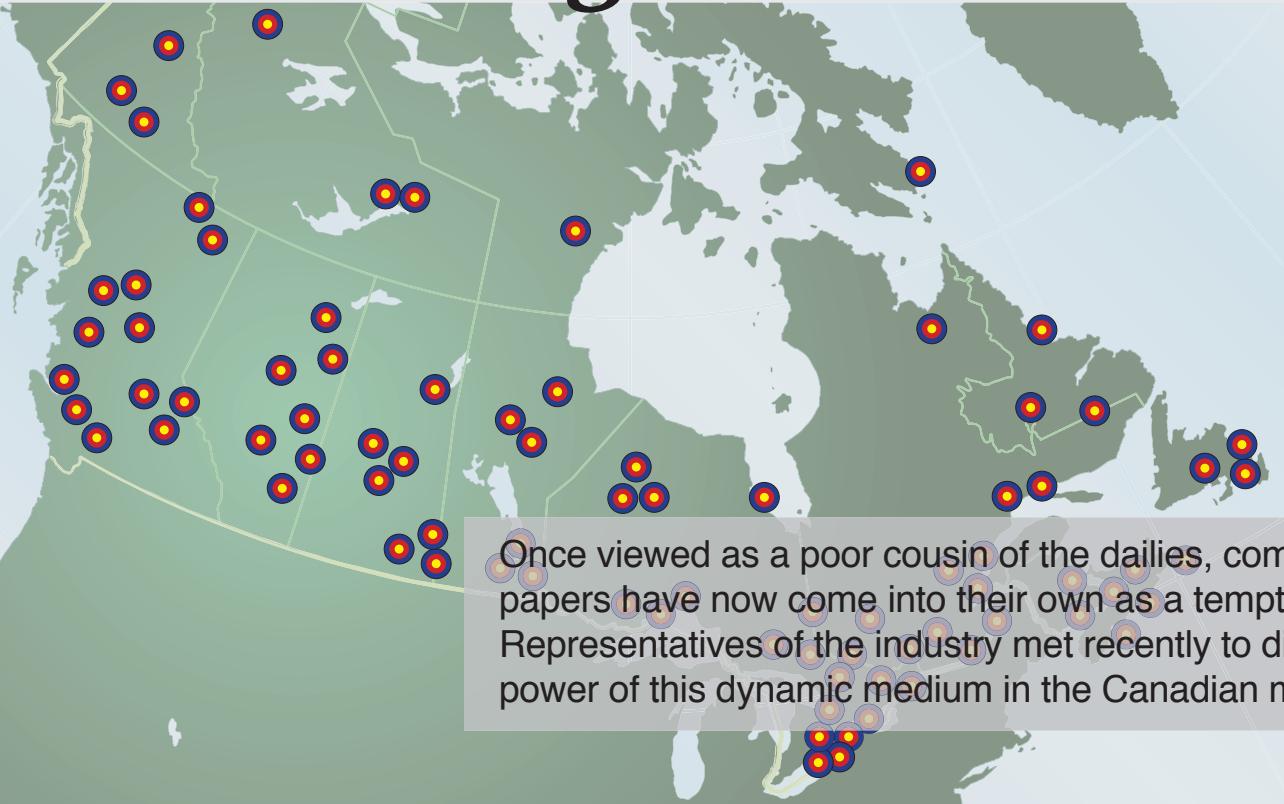
"It's time to change the mindset"  
- Robyn Matravers

April 2008

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## Counting on communities



Once viewed as a poor cousin of the dailies, community papers have now come into their own as a tempting media buy. Representatives of the industry met recently to discuss the power of this dynamic medium in the Canadian media market

**"Their attitude was, 'Why would we advertise in a community paper?'" Today, savvy media planners are sooner asking, 'Why not?'**

Over the years, there have been all sorts of dubious misconceptions about community papers — or more importantly, about the people that read them. A memorable one, reflected one industry rep, was that readers of community papers don't travel by plane.

"We went to one airline client and they said, 'Well, people reading community newspapers don't fly,'" laughed John Hinds, CEO of the Canadian Community Newspapers Association (CCNA), which represents 769 English-language community papers across the country. "Their attitude was, 'Why would we advertise in a community paper?'"

Today, savvy media planners are sooner asking, 'Why not?'

With an increasingly consolidated media market, community papers remain one of the last hold-outs of community-driven content. The industry's ComBase and StatHebdo media studies — the largest media survey in North America — have shown time and again that these papers have a loyal readership representing

an enviable demographic by anyone's standards. They have a higher average issue reach than any other medium, and household penetration remains unequalled by any other print medium in Canada.

"It's time to change the mindset," according to Robyn Matravers, executive director of the Ontario Community Newspapers Association (OCNA), whose member papers reach over 6 million readers. "Recent statistics show that we have sustained growth in our readership, while the dailies have seen a decline."

Hinds and Matravers were both participating at a special roundtable organized by the CCNA and Strategy magazine. The gathering was held in Ottawa this past February, and brought together representatives of the CCNA and various regional associations within its federation, as well as its Québec counterpart: Hebdos Québec. The goal of the meeting was to examine the evolving role and vast marketing potential of the community newspaper press in Canada, which currently numbers 850 papers.

# Impressive stats

Dominating the discussion was the groundbreaking ComBase study, a third party survey the CCNA initiated to supply the number crunching that media buyers were demanding. Together with supplier Maritz Thompson Lightstone, ComBase launched its first bi-annual market-by-market study in 2003. Its French-language counterpart, StatHebdo, was rolled out in Québec that same year. As a title-specific survey, ComBase measures individual community papers against other media, including dailies, radio and the ubiquitous TV. It also provides extensive national and regional numbers.

The information gleaned from ComBase and StatHebdo has been nothing short of remarkable, putting to rest any lingering scepticism on the impressive reach and ROI potential of community papers. To dip into just a few numbers, the most recent 2006 survey showed that 74 percent of Canadian adults read the last issue of their community paper. That figure was even higher in some provinces; in Saskatchewan it was a record 83 percent.

The study also revealed that 76 percent of adults with household incomes over \$75K are regular readers, as are most adults with a university education. The clincher, however, is that that 29 percent of readers across the country are exclusive readers, with that figure rising among some demographic subgroups, such as women with children.

"Demographic groups being reached by community newspapers are not the groups people thought they would be," pointed out Hinds. "There are really some interesting demographic trends that we are starting to see, and that advertisers are seeing as well. For example, about 50 percent of our market does not read any daily newspaper at all."

The ComBase and StatHebdo results back up what Hinds and his colleagues have known all along, namely that community papers are a good bet for many media messages. The study, however, gives added reliability. As Dennis Merrell, executive director of the Alberta Weekly Newspapers Association (AWNA), put it, "The key word is credibility. Earlier, there was basically

a dearth of really good readership information... and no definitive source the marketplace could go to in order to really see how our readership stacks up in these particular markets."

With ComBase and StatHebdo, that's no longer the case. The CCNA and Hebdo Québec promote the studies through agency tours and also rely on members to get the message out. Hebdo Québec has met with some of the province's media groups to share data gathered from their own study, StatHebdo. As well, a separate survey for official language community newspapers is being spearheaded by the Quebec Community Newspapers Association, which represents English-Language community newspapers in Québec, and L'Association de la Presse Francophone which represents Francophone community newspapers outside of Québec. The study is national in scope and is the first industry research initiative that focuses on official language community audiences specifically. A strategic alliance of (official language) minority community media has been formed under the working name AMMCOM.

For media buyers and planners, ComBase marks a significant breakthrough. It represents, "a huge step forward for community newspapers in the minds of national buyers," Debbie King, executive vice president and COO of Zenith Optimedia Canada Inc, explained in a post-roundtable interview.

"Are community papers a real consideration as a base media? Absolutely," said King. "ComBase allows us to look at the readership of the daily, versus the readership of the community papers, versus the viewership of the TV program."

## Reaping the rewards

Community papers are enjoying their new-found popularity. Business, they say, is booming, with a larger spectrum of companies from diverse industries turning to community papers to get their message across. Federal government buys, for instance, have jumped from about four to 17 percent, said Hinds, while in Saskatchewan the industry experienced overall growth of 12 percent in 2007 over 2006.

"Most of that growth came from corporate," noted Steve Nixon, executive director of the Saskatchewan Weekly Newspapers Association (SWNA), "Especially agricultural companies that are starting to move away from traditional farming publications."

This includes agro-business heavyweights like Syngenta Crop Protection Canada Inc., who previously rarely placed more than an odd spot for a localized meeting in a community paper. "Now they are putting through large campaigns. These campaigns have started to become significant business," said Nixon.

### Community Media Canada: The right tools

Making it easy for marketers and media planners is what it's all about, says John Hinds, CEO of the Canadian Community Newspapers Association (CCNA).

The CCNA and its Quebec counterpart Hebdo Québec have been doing just that with some practical tools they've developed through their joint marketing arm, Community Media Canada (CMC).

This includes online programs like the Campaign Calculator, which helps clients learn about CCNA's member papers, plan an entire ad campaign and estimate cost.

"Companies and media planners can see what their budget will buy them and get a sense of the scope of our industry," says Hinds.

Also available is an online Market Analyzer program – or Plan Hebdo for the French-language market – which helps clients identify a target market and determine the best distribution options for the media buying opportunity.

"You can see who is buying farm equipment, or cars, or other products," says Hinds. "You can look at people's purchasing intentions, where they have purchased and take census data and overlay that onto a distribution area of a newspaper."



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Also eyeing the market are what Hinds called the "Maxwell Houses of this world."

"We've seen some smaller campaigns from the packaged goods industry," he said. "Traditionally they have not been big advertisers, but with the results of ComBase and StatHebdo showing exclusive readers in certain demographics, we are starting to see packaged goods and food companies come in. It's a huge growth area for us."

The financial services sector has also re-positioned itself to advertise in the community press, in particular banks with their renewed emphasis on community

banking. TD Canada Trust regularly uses community papers for its core banking campaigns, running the ads in approximately 250 community papers across the country.

"TD Bank is providing a more localized message so that the consumers in the markets can see that their business is important to the bank," said Eric Kuiper, vp group account director at The Media Company, in a separate discussion with Strategy magazine. "Banks can often be seen as a big faceless corporation, but if we're speaking directly to them through a local community paper it personalizes it."

Hydro One, the largest electricity delivery company in Ontario, is also a regular advertiser. The utility company sees community papers as the "best way to reach (its) audience, in most cases," Hydro One spokesperson Daniele Gauvin told Strategy.

As the main electrical utility delivering power to non-urban regions of Ontario, the community press represents an excellent opportunity for Hydro One to communicate directly to its target market. The company is now rolling out its PowerPlay campaign in community



## Glacier Ventures International Corp: Covering the market

"Community newspapers present a primary channel for marketing in the community," says Jonathon Kennedy, president and CEO of Glacier Ventures International Corp., a Vancouver-based trade and newspaper publisher.

Glacier's 120 community papers reach 70 markets across Western Canada. Its combined print distribution is about 1.4 million copies weekly, and it has the broadest coverage of any community publisher in the region, says Kennedy.

With its extensive portfolio, Glacier offers total market

coverage in the communities it serves, either with a free distribution weekly covering the whole market, or a combination of both weekly and daily publications.

"We offer total market coverage through our mix of paid and free distribution publications," says Kennedy.

In Estevan, Saskatchewan, for instance, Glacier publishes both the Estevan Mercury as well as Estevan Lifestyles.

"Glacier believes in the strength of the community papers," says Kennedy. "They are a primary source of information for readers in the communities they serve."

◀ Serving over 70 communities in Canada

## Three points of contact for planning, buying and getting results with community newspapers throughout Canada.



## Connecting you to local communities.

papers. The ads promote the PowerPlay charitable program, which benefits children's outdoor and active play facilities. "It was a case where we said, 'Okay, how do we get the message out?' Community newspapers was the way to go."

The automotive sector, after straying for a while, came back full force in the mid-80s and has been a consistent advertiser ever since. "They are spending a lot of money in community newspapers and they are getting results," said the AWNA's Merrell. "That is one of our big success stories. They are able to

move vehicles and the reason for that is advertising in the community press."

There are even those campaigns that have surprised everyone involved with the amount of interest they've generated. In the three prairie provinces of Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba, one television satellite provider was forced to pull its ads out of the local weeklies half-way into a holiday campaign. Its call centre couldn't handle the flood of calls, nor could it ensure a Christmas delivery. "They couldn't even put them in by the end of February," said the SWNA's Nixon. "It speaks to the enormous success of the campaign."

## Canwest Community Publishing:

The value of community papers is best evidenced by the many corporate publishers moving into the market. Canwest is one of them.

"We determined that the strategy of providing local information is going to be in high demand and will continue to grow," says Rob Leuschner, president of Canwest Community Publishing.

Since taking up his position in 2006, Leuschner has added a number of new properties to the Canwest community portfolio: five community newspapers in Ontario's Windsor Essex region and two in Ottawa. They join the company's

existing community titles, which include 12 on the Metro Vancouver area and 7 on Vancouver Island.

Two of Canwest Community Publishing's BC papers, The North Shore News and the Vancouver Courier, were recent winners of first and third place CCNA awards for general excellence in the largest circulation class.

Moving forward, Canwest is improving these newspapers' websites, which it views as a great opportunity. "The sites offer great content to our readers and excellent opportunities for local and national advertisers," says Leuschner.

"Some of the best community newspapers in Canada" ►

## Doing it right

The grassroots success of these, and other, campaigns depends largely on proper placement. With hundreds of papers to choose from, this can prove tricky, even for the most wizened media expert. As well, with most buyers based out of large cities — not exactly a stronghold of community weeklies — they often lack an innate understanding of the medium.

"The buying community is essentially incredibly urban and incredibly young, and

B.C. Ferries' new Super C-class ferry, Coastal Renaissance, practices docking in Hornby Island Bay. The new, German-built vessel was delivered to the B.C. Ferries fleet in March and will be the first to regularly serve the new Horseshoe Bay terminal. The vessel will be making its first day-to-day service to the Port of Vancouver on Friday on her way to British Columbia.



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if you've grown up in an urban setting like Toronto you've probably never been west of Mississauga," said Hinds. "Our challenge is to make it easy and relevant for them to buy the product."

The CCNA, Hebdos Québec and the various regional associations have stepped up to the plate. Online media planning tools, such as the CMC Market Analyzer and PlanHebdo, help buyers navigate the extensive, complex world of the community press. Regional sales and marketing arms such as Ad\*Reach in Ontario, AdWest Interactive, VanNet and Black Press in Western Canada, AdAtlantic out East and Réseau Select and Quebecor Ventes Media in Québec help guide the selection and placement process.

AdAtlantic, for example, helps clients tailor campaigns to reach the one-million strong readers of the 60 community newspapers in the four Atlantic provinces. Promoting itself as a one-call service, it facilitates ad placement, provides single-invoice service and supplies clients with a custom login to receive tearsheets.

What is it about community papers that make them a popular read among the 17 million Canadians who turn to them each week? Simply put, it's their relevance to readers at the most local and personal level. Community papers are a reliable source of information on local issues, all the way from road closures and school board votes, to the results of the latest little league softball game. With news on international developments omnipresent in the mainstream press, community papers are part of a shrinking group of media vehicles delivering solid information on



## Multimedia Nova Corporation: Media for the New Mainstream

"Media for the New Mainstream represents a dramatic shift in marketing strategy," says Lori Abittan, president and CEO of Multimedia Nova Corporation. "Traditional marketing places consumers in neat little packages targeting their cultural behaviour—not their spending power. We know that people cross markets."

Multimedia Nova publishes over 25 publications (newspaper, online, specialty supplements) including 16 community and language newspapers for the GTA and one newspaper in Montreal. Through their newest subsidiary, Diversity Media Services (DMS), they represent more than 100 publishers in 40 languages tapping into the most unexplored, wealthy and diverse markets with a critical mass of 1.3 million households.

Crossing markets and maximizing their clients' marketing plan allows advertisers to think globally and act locally. For example, DMS executed brand and event ads throughout Ontario Place's summer season, resulting in higher concentrations of visitors from targeted communities.

◀ Lori Abittan, President & CEO of Multimedia Nova Corp, and staff

### VANCOUVER ISLAND

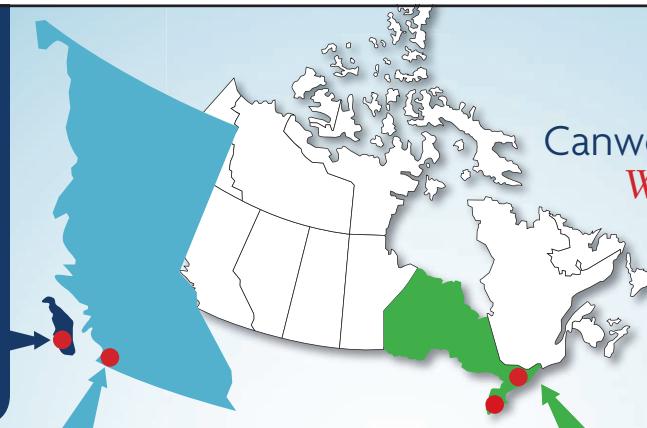
Campbell River Courier-Islander  
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## Ad\*Reach, AdWest, AdAtlantic: Three phone calls away

With hundreds of community papers spread across the country, advertising in the medium can seem daunting.

It doesn't have to be. In fact, with just three phone calls advertisers and media agencies can contact three rep houses that together represent community papers in eight Canadian provinces.

"With three phone calls you cover over 600 newspapers with a readership of about 10 million," says Robyn Matravers, executive director of the Ontario Community Newspapers Association and its sales division, Ad\*Reach Ontario.

In addition to Ad\*Reach Ontario, there is AdWest for the three prairie provinces and AdAtlantic for the four Atlantic ones. While all three agencies operate as sales divisions of community newspaper associations for their region, they deliver a whole lot more than just sales and ad placement.

All three sales arms provide market data/research, mapping/geo-targeting, and maintain repositories of positioning opportunities, special sections, features etc. in order to deliver the best opportunities to their clients.

issues very, very close to home.

The community paper network remains strongest in rural and suburban Canada. However as urban centres expand into massive metropolises, their inhabitants readily turn to their more localized communities for a connection. While traditionally geographic in nature, there are now more ethno-cultural papers entering the category. "We have several ethnic publications and these are publications of substance," said the OCNA's Matravers. "One Vietnamese weekly paper has a 200+ page count and is full of advertising."

North America's oldest newspaper, The Quebec Chronicle-Telegraph, was a community paper founded in 1764 to service the city's English-language population. Newer start-ups, like CanWest's Surrey Now, launched in the 1980s, are hinting at equally strong longevity. The paper is circulated to an impressive 115,000 homes in lower mainland BC twice a week, rivalling that of the local daily.

CanWest, meanwhile, is not the only

major publishing house to edge into the community newspaper market. Today, more than half of CCNA's member papers are owned by major publishers, reflecting the growing importance of the medium.

"In the past ten years we've gone from being an essentially ma and pa industry, to one where 50 to 60 percent of our titles are corporate controlled," said Hinds.

Community papers are also building their online presence, developing parallel websites that vary from the very basic to highly sophisticated sites in regions with high broadband penetration. These sites deliver immediate information to readers, be it weather forecasts or updates on local road conditions. They are becoming "dailies on the Web," said Nancy Leggett-Bachand, executive director of Hebdom Qu<sup>e</sup>bec. "They give out daily information."

With more web activity, impressive readership numbers and more and more media planners eyeing the medium, times are good for community papers in Canada.

And that once cynical airline prospect, the one who didn't think readers of community papers could afford to fly?



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# 40 pushing 16

**Youth culture rules, encompassing every age group in its glow**

◀ By Natalia Williams ▶

Be happy, it's finally true: you're an ageless wonder. At least that's the message behind more and more marketing today.

As baby boomers redefine what it means to age (40 is the new 30, after all) and young

people control the media sphere, the line between youth and adult marketing is blurring. Youth culture is now contemporary culture, and gone are the days when marketing to youth and adults employed different age-appropriate tactics and strategies.

"Youth culture used to be about a specific age group," says Ken Therrien, CD at DDB KidThink, the Vancouver-based youth agency. "Now it's about an attitude that transcends age groups. The quest for youth and youthfulness is driving popular culture."

While youth culture has always been a precursor of trends, what's different now, according to experts, is that seismic societal and technological movements are contributing to a complete upheaval of the definitions of young and old. Today, young people live at home and stay in school longer, delaying

marriage and having children. The result is, in a sense, an extended adolescence.

It has also, says Robert Barnard, founder of Toronto-based Decode, resulted in the creation of a youth/adult life stage that his research agency calls the Young Independents.

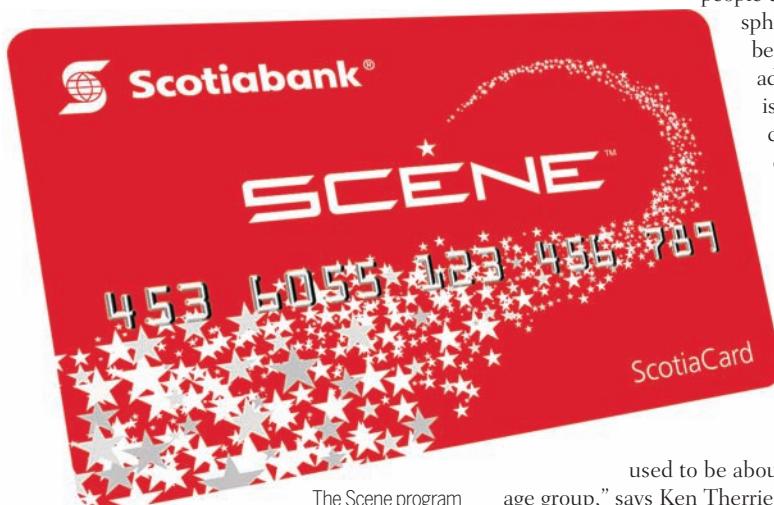
Based on research from a June 2007 Decode report, Barnard says that Young Independents represent about 10% of the Canadian population. "They are 18 to 35, even 40, not in school and don't have kids," he says. "They can be in a common-law relationship, married or single, any of those combinations, [but] they are in between those two institutions of school and family."

Barnard says it is a stage where those living it may feel uncertain about where their lives are going, but those on the outside covet its appearance of freedom and lack of responsibility. "It is becoming the societal signal of youthful," he says. "The Young Independent is a more contemporary version of youthfulness as opposed to a teenager."

Technology – namely the Internet – is also profoundly contributing to the upheaval.

"Media has changed over the past 10 to 15 years in a way that we've never seen before," says Mike Farrell, partner and chief strategic officer at Toronto-based youth agency Youthography. "The Internet is the new printing press. And the people who are in charge, born into this new printing press, are young people."

"For us, a culture of 30+, [the Internet is] learned behavior. For them, it's just what's up. It's all about them, and it's all been driven by



The Scene program gives Scotiabank a halo of youthfulness

them." Farrell points to the fact that social networks such as Facebook, MySpace and even Google and eBay were all created by people in their early 20s – and have permeated the wider cultural landscape rapidly and completely.

"What's happening with this generation is that they're actually driving trends – both psychographics and values," he says. "They're changing demography and, on top of that, they're in charge of the entire media."

Everything's coming together, so it's a perfect storm of youth culture completely and utterly influencing the larger mainstream culture in a more robust way than ever before."

In the realm of marketing, that's meant the adoption of youthful tactics such as gaming and social media for brands skewing all ages – running the gamut from online spoofs to alternate reality games (ARGs).

Even traditionally serious brands are tapping



Even Scotiabank's retirement ads tap into the youth ideal

into the movement. Farrell highlights the new energy behind Scotiabank's recent sponsorship initiatives (Nuit Blanche), advertising and brand hook-ups like Scene, its loyalty program partnership with movie theatre chain Cineplex.

"Scene is a bank-oriented lifestyle promotion program that you wouldn't have seen before,"

he says. (His agency contributed to some of its initial research.)

"They're starting to see that they're not going to alienate their older customers by doing this. And in the current cultural context, it might make older customers feel a little more youthful, or add a nice halo of youthfulness to their brand."

It's an attitude that's also being reflected in the bank's retirement ads, says DDB's Therrien. In a current spot, a couple is consulting with a Scotiabank financial planner. While he is interested in a low-key retirement, she silently reveals her true plans to the Scotiabank rep through a series of handwritten signs: tennis lessons and a trek through South America.

"His version of retirement is what it used to be, it's the old," says Therrien. "Her version is youthful. Wouldn't a 21-year-old love to have the financial resources to take tennis lessons or explore Brazil? So it's tapping into that youth ideal."

## Scope gets fresh with your breath

◀ By Lucy Saddleton ▶



**Mission:** To generate buzz around Scope mouthwash and raise the profile of the product, Procter & Gamble launched a fun microsite featuring exploding heads and other sight gags. Part of the learning is to assess how well a saucy interactive initiative – backed by PR rather than mass media – works for P&G. The seeding test is particularly targeting the 18- to 35-year-old demographic, and is skewed towards males.

**Threat assessment:** Taking the product in a totally new direction presents a challenge to P&G and their agency for this project, Toronto-based Dentsu. Mouthwash is not typically associated with fun viral campaigns, so will people play along?

**The plan:** Dentsu spent a year planning the microsite [testyourbreath.ca](http://testyourbreath.ca), which launched in March. It's designed to reach the young web-browser looking for something a little

different and interactive to do online, following a similar thread to the Subservient Chicken site launched by Burger King in 2004.

A visitor to the site faces a man in an elevator, and is given the option of breathing into a microphone or typing in the food they've eaten most recently to test their breath toxicity. I type in "onion." The man's head explodes as he holds up a bottle of Scope and a breathometer flips to the word "noxious." Clearly I need to invest in Scope. The man can react in 12 different ways, ranging from removing his nose to foaming at the mouth or sniffing a skunk's behind.

"Hopefully people will play with it and have fun with it," explains Michael Gramlow, creative director, interactive, at Dentsu, "and we'll generate watercooler buzz."

Alexandra Glover, assistant brand manager for oral care at Toronto-based P&G, believes that the campaign is ideal for capturing the interest of Scope's target. "The younger

demographic are image-conscious, experimental consumers," she says.

The campaign will not be supported by any mainstream media but by youth-friendly blogs, distribution lists and viral streams.

Traditional media simply doesn't hold the same appeal to the youth of today, according to Glen Hunt, creative catalyst at Dentsu. "We're constantly having information pushed at us," he explains. "The interactivity of this campaign allows the consumer to become part of the message, which has a far stronger pull."

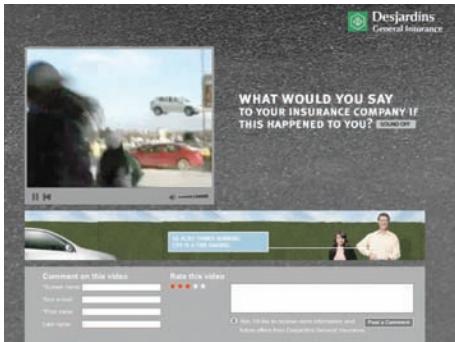
**The prognosis:** The agency will be monitoring it closely to measure the number of hits in the early weeks. What's more, Hunt reveals that Dentsu is already in talks with P&G about creating a similar site for another oral health product in the Scope range, this time targeting the young female consumer. Watch this space...



Another financial institution using youthful marketing tactics is Desjardins General Insurance. When the Levis, Que.-based financial giant wanted to launch a campaign last year targeting 18- to 24-year-old drivers in Ontario making their first foray into car insurance, the brand was relatively unknown among the target. So the challenge lay in creating awareness for Desjardins, as well as generating interest in a product typically pitched at older consumers.

To get there, with the help of Youthography, two viral videos were released onto the web in March as the start of a larger campaign which also included two TV spots, radio, cinema, OOH and print ads. In one video, "Damage," a group of teen boys watches their car being demolished by a bizarre, invisible force in a parking lot, and in "Theft," a car flies up into the sky while teen girls watch in astonishment.

One version of the videos directs consumers to [mycarisgone.com](http://mycarisgone.com), where they can comment



Viral videos helped Desjardins reach a young audience

on it and forward it to friends. They can also opt to receive further communication from Desjardins. Another version directs them to [geared4u.ca](http://geared4u.ca), a site that provides information about insurance for young drivers, and quotes.

"It was intuitive for us to do something viral," explains Sean Claessen, creative director at

Youthography. "If you say that your product is for young people, you have to walk the walk. A viral campaign is more tangible than anything you can do with traditional advertising."

The viral spots hit YouTube last June, and Claessen says the campaign succeeded in raising awareness of the brand among the youth demographic and driving traffic to the [geared4u.ca](http://geared4u.ca) site. But there are more practical changes that still have to occur within the industry, says Decode's Barnard. Media buying, for example, still in large part operates like the man in the Scotiabank ad, he says. "Companies have to find a way to buy media [according to life stage]," he says. "They have to get away from age-based segmentation; it doesn't work."

"[With media] things roll along quickly, but youthfulness is constant," says Therrien. "You have to be on top of it, because what's new today is not new tomorrow." ■

## Nissan plays with Much to spark demand



◀ By Lucy Saddleton ▶

**Mission:** Partner with a youth brand to create an exciting multi-platform campaign to promote the 2008 Nissan Versa and position it as a fun, youthful car, targeting urban active people in their early 20s.

**Threat assessment:** The auto industry is very competitive, so Nissan needed to generate big buzz to get in the game.

**The plan:** "The youth market today is very active online, so we

wanted to connect with them through their own media and create the sense of a big event," says Wendy Durward, marketing communications director at Mississauga-based Nissan Canada.

Nissan chose MuchMusic due to its strong connection with the demo, and a campaign was hatched last November with the help of agency TBWA\Toronto. It combined TV product placement with online interactivity and, most importantly, the lure of a live car giveaway and on-air Versa game antics.

A TV spot airing on *MuchOnDemand* directed viewers to [muchmusic.com](http://muchmusic.com). Once online, browsers were asked to take the Nissan Versa test for a chance to win a car, and entrants were encouraged to provide the email addresses of their friends, who would then receive a message urging them to enter. For every friend, the original participant would receive a bonus entry.

And for the product placement element, before a random

name was drawn on air, the *MuchOnDemand* audience was seen interacting with the car in customized games. One car was given away in Toronto and a second in Quebec, in partnership with MusiquePlus.

**The prognosis:** Close to 11,000 people entered the contest and more than 9,000 opted to receive Nissan's email newsletters, providing the brand with a customized mailing list for future promos.

What's more, TBWA's group account director, Richard Phillips, confirms that web traffic to [Nissan.ca](http://Nissan.ca) and [Versanights.ca](http://Versanights.ca) increased considerably as a result of the campaign, and Nissan succeeded in positioning the Versa as a fun, youthful vehicle.

The success of the campaign was such that Durward says Nissan hopes to hook up with MuchMusic again in the near future for an even bigger and more deeply integrated promotion.

# MTV lets you have it (any way you want it)



Rapper T.I. (right) on the mic with *MTV Live* hosts Daryn Jones and Nicole Harness

"Young people today want content to be available on whatever device they want at whatever time they want it," says Brad Schwartz, SVP/GM music and youth services at CTVglobemedia.

MTV in Canada, now two years young, appears to be doing a good job of that with seven platforms – not to mention staying on the lookout for new vehicles to add to its arsenal for communicating with its 12- to 34-year-old target. MTV currently pipes content out through conventional TV, analog specialty TV, a broadband website, iTunes and mobile-phone viewing, and shares its brand essence via on-the-ground events and concerts and consumer products.

"When we spread a brand across many platforms, young people are more engaged in that content," says Schwartz, noting that the whole becomes greater than the sum of its parts, which is especially key for the digerati demo. Explaining MTV's broad demographic, Schwartz says the brand is more

concerned with targeting a mental attitude than a specific age group: "People are staying younger longer."

MTV schedules are heavy on hosted talk shows and lifestyle and documentary programming, with a commitment to 71% Canadian programming in prime time, though

**They're into collective cocooning and staying very close**

many popular MTV U.S. shows also air in Canada. Music is notably absent from MTV in Canada (setting it apart from other MTV-branded channels around the world), because under current CRTC format regulations, MuchMusic (now also owned by CTVglobemedia) is the only English-language channel that can

MTV in Canada converses and connects by staking a claim in every place (and every device) frequented by its audience

◀ By Lucy Saddleton ▶

be devoted to music.

David Kines, SVP music and youth services at CTVglobemedia, says that there are no plans to join MTV and MuchMusic together at the consumer level. "We believe that the value lies in the differences between these two very powerful brands," he says. "We want to maximize both brands by emphasizing the distinctions."

Both brands target the same audience, and despite its obvious lack of VJs, MTV has created a similar audience hook and continuity via its diverse cast of charismatic hosts who helm the talk and show intro/extro pieces. They also participate in on-air events, such as the recent Tussle in the Temple, in which comedian Daryn Jones battled the net's popular flunkie Paul The Intern, or The Largest Loser contest, in which more trash was talked than weight was lost.

MTV.ca offers on-demand music, videos, video games and movie trailers to the techno-savvy youth market as well as full-length episodes from MTV shows. Last year, streaming accounted for 80% of activity on mtv.ca, with TV shows the most popular feature.

Since last year, consumers have been able to purchase and download MTV programming from the Apple iTunes digital media player application. In fact, iTunes now features more content from MTV than from any other supplier. In addition, Bell Mobility and Rogers Wireless video subscribers can watch

full episodes of MTV shows on their phones while on the go. Consumers can also text MTV to access new ringtones and mobile downloads.

Consumer involvement is a critical part of the brand's success, according to Schwartz. "Communication is absolutely the hallmark of young people today," he says. "They're into collective cocooning and staying very close." As such, MTV encourages consumer interaction by offering in-studio opportunities, live webcams and talk shows incorporating consumer emails and phone calls. This approach even led to the creation of exportable new content that revolves around the interaction. MTV in Canada created *The Hills After Show* in 2006 to give consumers a lively forum for discussing the MTV hit show *The Hills*, and had a hit of its own on its hands.

"We knew that when the show ended on Monday nights, people were talking about it with their friends, so we decided to create a new show that would get young Canadians from coast to coast together to talk about it," says Schwartz. Viewers can contribute from the studio audience or via email, webcam or phone. It struck such a chord that the show was picked up last year by MTV in the U.S., which aired a live simulcast on mtv.com.

And every day the network invites its youthful audience to join the conversation during the



Amy Winehouse makes a guest appearance on *MTV Live*

interactive talk show *MTV Live*, which gives viewers the chance to kibbitz with popular MTV hosts such as Jones and Dan Levy, or help interview celebrity guests, either from the live audience at the Masonic Temple, MTV's studio in Toronto, or via email. In addition to pop culture, serious social and political issues are often

tackled, which gives the brand more authority than a strictly entertainment agenda.

MTV also partners with other brands to build engagement. For example, a promotion with Rogers lets MTV expand on its non-downloadable online streaming platform The Leak (a global MTV franchise through which many artists debut their albums online). Now Rogers cellphone users in Canada can stream music from mtv.ca directly onto their phones, a week before it hits the stores.

Online contests are another major part of the MTV agenda, with current youth-friendly prizes including tickets to the Telus World Ski & Snowboard Festival in B.C., and to UFC 83 in Montreal. Tens of thousands of entries are usually received, while some attract more than a million.

MTV's most recent venture was a line of vinyl toys called MTV Fauna, based on the network's on-air graphics. If you want to target the youth market, Schwartz says, "having a strong brand is more crucial than ever in this fragmented digital world."

In the U.S., MTV is partnering with Hollywood producer Jerry Bruckheimer on a videogame development studio to bolster the huge success of its game *Rock Band*. By constantly coming up with new ways to engage its consumers, MTV manages to keep itself top-of-mind through sheer volition.

*With files from Mary Maddever*

A photograph showing a group of nine people, including men and women, standing on a red carpet. They are dressed in formal attire. In the foreground, a large, shiny silver trophy is partially visible. The background shows a set of red steps and a building.

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# Vice is everywhere

## (the cool kids are: from Montreal to Baghdad, street to web to screen)

◀ By Lucy Saddleton ▶

International lifestyle brand Vice is a prime example of how fearlessness, combined with fresh thinking and staying in tune with its demo, can keep a brand one step ahead of the competition. It began in 1994 as a modest Montreal-based magazine and has since snowballed into a multifaceted youth-culture media empire boasting, among other things, its own film company, record label and broadband channel.

In a feat of synergy, Vice Films' highly acclaimed feature-length documentary *Heavy Metal in Baghdad*, which follows the plight of Iraqi heavy-metal band Acrassicauda,

premiered at the 2007 Toronto International Film Festival, then was picked up by Arts Alliance America and had its U.S. premiere last month at Austin, TX's SXSW Film Festival – the first magazine-to-web-to-film project to make that leap. The North American DVD and theatrical release in June will be preceded by 12 university campus screenings across Canada.

By staying relevant and constantly coming up with new ways to communicate with its youthful consumer, Vice has expanded into 15 countries, with a global magazine circulation expected to reach one million by the end of the year. In

Right: a flyer from Vice's "100 parties in 100 nights" promotion, sponsored by Solo Mobile and held in nightspots across Canada



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Canada, it distributes 55,000 copies of each issue, and the two websites garner around 100,000 unique visitors each.

Now based in New York, the free magazine targets the urban 21- to 34-year-old trendsetter, with a skew towards males. Topics range from pop and underground culture to environmental and political issues.

Much of the company's success can be attributed to honesty, according to Shawn Phelan, director of sales at Vice's Toronto office. "There is an authenticity to the dialogue we have with our readers," he says. "We are going to call things as we see them, and if that gets us in trouble with advertisers or scares some of them away, so be it."

In March 2007 Vice delved deeper into the world of youth culture with the launch of vbs.tv, an advertiser-supported broadband site that streams original content 24 hours a day. Within three months of its launch, vbs.tv had already surpassed Vice magazine in popularity. The latest big documentary to hit the site is *The Vice Guide to North Korea*.

Despite its often controversial content, vbs.tv manages to lure many blue-chip advertisers hoping to reach the lucrative youth market, including Honda and Toyota as well as telecoms like Nokia and CPG companies. Marketing partnerships with online networks like YouTube



Vice co-founder Shane Smith working on *The Vice Guide to North Korea*, one of a series of Vice documentaries

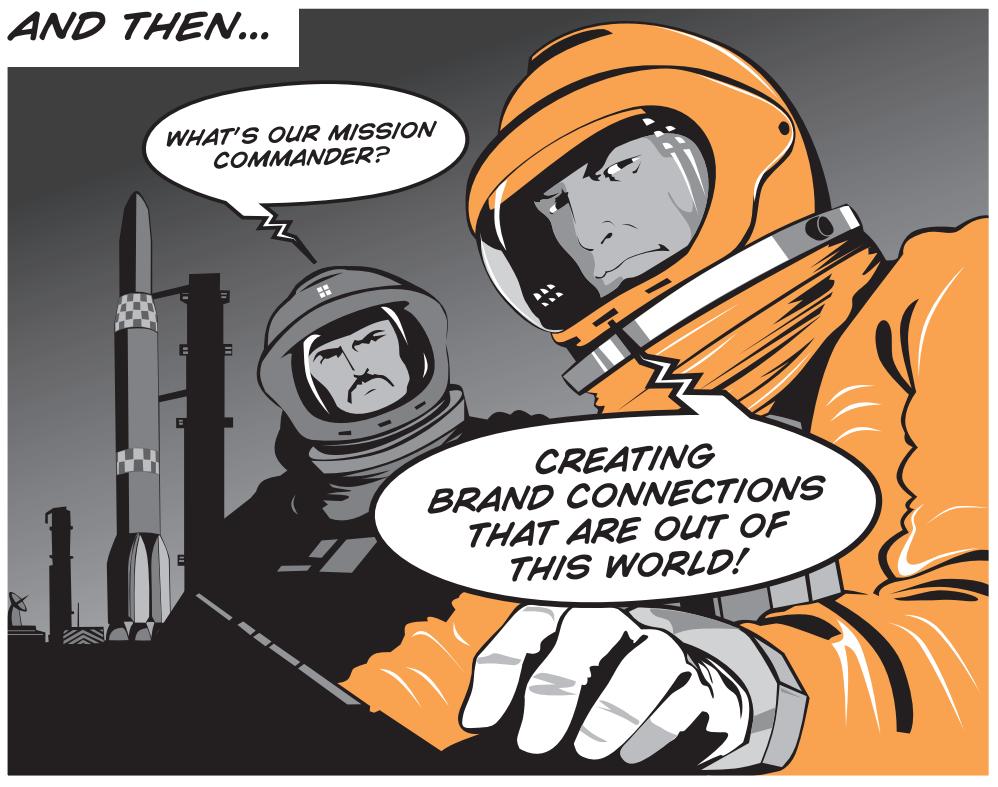
and MySpace allow advertisers to reach a broader spectrum of Internet users.

"We are selling ads to companies that we'd never have dreamed of selling to five years ago," says Phelan. In fact, he says vbs.tv is often an "easier sell" than the magazine, due

to customized content, created by Vice in partnership with the client, and the use of geo-targeted advertising, which delivers the brand directly to consumers in the right location.

Vice also partners with brands to throw parties for young consumers, such as last September's

**AND THEN...**

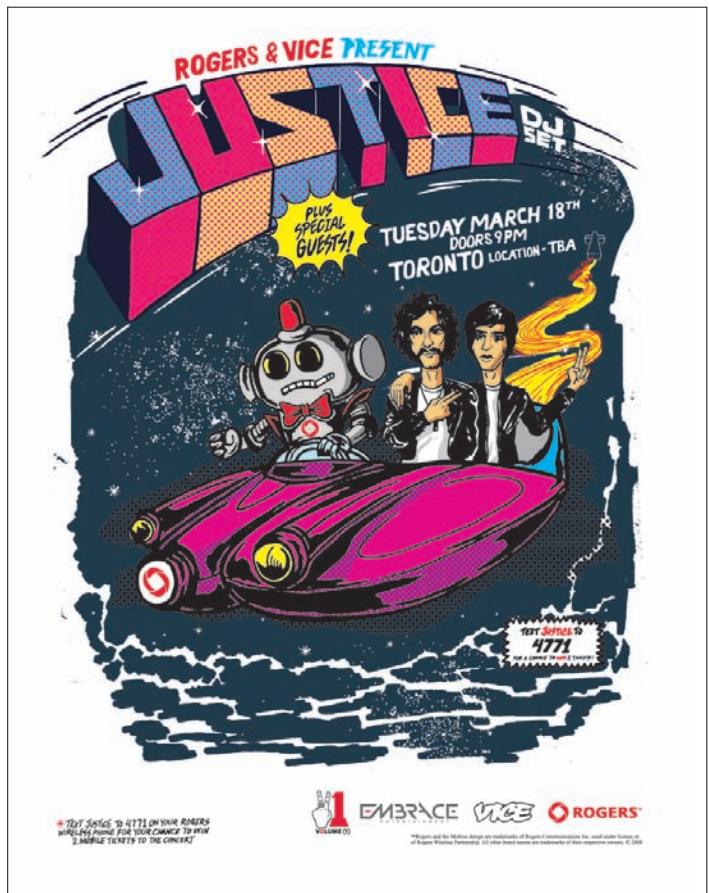


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Vice partnered with Rogers to showcase Justice, who are also on the Vice Records label

Festival Ball in Toronto in partnership with CKIN2U and Rimmel London, and last month's showcase for Vice Records label duo Justice at Toronto's The Great Hall, hosted in collaboration with Rogers.

marketing and creative services agency, Virtue, founded two years ago by Spencer Baim, formerly of global agency Fallon. The New York-based agency specializes in brand strategy and creative

And the original magazine website, ViceLand.com, still manages to attract a vast audience with its forums, contests and opportunities for

work for Vice as well as for outside brands looking to tap into the Vice mindset. "The Vice brand is so interesting and real. We help other brands connect with that," explains Baim. The agency now has six offices, including one in Toronto.

Even Vice's ad hook-ups are different. When Adidas re-released its Adicolor LO shoe

We are going to call things as we see them, and if that **gets us in trouble with advertisers** or scares some of them away, so be it

reader comments. "Communication is essential. We're never shy about talking to the consumer," explains Phelan. Books including *Vice Dos and Don'ts* (2004) give yet another arm to the brand. And in partnership with MTV, Vice also produces original long-form DVDs, including *The Vice Guide to Travel*.

Vice also benefits from its own

collection in 2006 (originally launched in 1983), the brand partnered with Vice to create a limited-edition version. The sole and detailing on the P3 Century Low Vice is the same magenta colour as the magazine's headlines. The Vice logo is written on the tongue, and the stitched wording on the sides reads "Old Blue Last," which is the name of a Vice-owned pub in London, England. The two brands also collaborated to produce a viral video featuring the Adicolor shoes and music from the Atlanta-based rock group Black Lips, a Vice Records band, thus adding value to another arm of the Vice brand.

Since Adidas partners with the It-list of art, fashion and design on this custom trainers program, it's a seal of cool approval that Vice has evolved from media brand status to a broader, more amorphous pop culture standing. That unique identity helps explain why the brand's appeal ranges all the way from teens to vintage hipsters.

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Online advertising can hit the bulls-eye in ways no other medium can. Thanks to the rapid advancement of research and technology, online destinations, portals and networks can slice and dice consumer segments to enable marketers to target quite finely, based on criteria ranging from geography to behaviour and areas of interest.

Advertisers now need only reach – and pay for – the consumers that they want to reach and who are most interested in their products or services.

Nick Barbuto, director of digital solutions at Cossette Media in Toronto, says, "Online we can pinpoint target specifically users who have already booked travel to Mexico and we can talk to them at that point in time. There really are these media opportunities that don't exist in any other media environment."

Barbuto says it's all about placing the right message within online content that is relevant to the consumer target, finding the

proper context that pre-qualifies the online user for the advertiser.

He also says that rather than clickthroughs, it's more important to be proactive and bring the message to the consumer, not the consumer to the message.

"Our focus as media buyers is not trying to find places where you can get people to click through to find out more. We now focus on trying to deliver as much of the message to the user within the experience they're currently in. It's the synergy that happens within the media placement along with the creative message."

## Reach, consumer insights, and engagement online



Yahoo! Canada ([www.yahoo.ca](http://www.yahoo.ca)) has the content that draws millions of users each and every day as well as the insights and technology needed to target key demographic groups.

Robin Hassan, head of sales strategy at Yahoo! Canada, says, "Our Sales Team is finding that more and more of our clients want to leverage the fact that we talk to the consumers and audiences they're trying to engage everyday, and they're working with us to bring their messaging within our content experience in unique and engaging ways."

The Yahoo! Canada Sales team offers: Integration Opportunities, Targeting solutions, Takeovers and coming soon (for more ROI-focused advertisers) – direct response. Hassan explains that the Direct Response offering will provide clients with real time optimization and auction-based pricing to help reach their best performing targets most efficiently.

Targeting Canadian audiences, she says begins at one of Yahoo's Starting points: the Yahoo! Front page, Yahoo! Mail, My Yahoo! and the Yahoo! Search Engine. These are the destinations where online users know they are going to get the most engaging content from that point onward, and they are also the perfect locations for advertisers looking for mass reach.

"With the Yahoo! Front page for example, we can guarantee eight million impressions in a day. That's well over the reach an advertiser would receive with a Super Bowl ad\* available every day of the year!"

From one of these Starting points users are

drawn to Magnet sites, which are the richer, content-driven sites such as news, finance, sports, entertainment and lifestyle. Those sites help us build insights and provide relevant behavioural targeting and content integration options that help clients reach their bullseye target, says Hassan.

With so many destination choices online (ex. a new blog created every 1.4 seconds), Hassan says content rich portal destinations such as Yahoo are more relevant than ever.

"The whole point of the Internet is to help simplify our lives – that's why from a consumer standpoint Starting points like Yahoo! are key in reaching Canadians. They bring the best of the web to one reliable destination."

\* BBM Top 30 weekly report, 2008 Superbowl AMAs were 4.2 Million

## Integrated content with pinpoint demo targeting



canada.com, as its name would suggest, is very relevant to Canadians. It's one of the country's leading destinations for news and information, but is so much more than that, says Dave Stevens, VP, product management and strategy, Canwest Digital. The portal's channels, which span a range of areas of interest such as sports, entertainment, lifestyle, health and travel – all have very strong content, making them ideal vehicles for targeted campaigns.

Stevens says, "Our sales team has moved towards really integrating advertisers into our rich content, because content is our unique value proposition. We are the strongest content company in Canada, without a doubt. We produce more content



Yahoo! Canada partnered with TD Canada Trust on a front-page rich media execution that really got people moving (see sidebar page S58).

## canada.com – Content, content, content

The canada.com network is the online property of Canwest Global Communications, the largest media company in Canada; part of a network that includes online sites for 11 major daily newspapers, including the National Post, two conventional TV networks (Global and E!), and a large roster of popular specialty channels. canada.com is all about content that reaches a multitude of demographics – drawing Canadians of all ages, from right across the country, with a variety of tastes and interests. canada.com's spectrum of 65 (and growing) content-rich sites allows advertisers to stage a mass-reach campaign, or opt for more precise targeting based on geography, areas or interest, gender or other demographics.

"We're national in scope, but local in ability – which means we can target an audience, whether it be in Montreal or Calgary or Edmonton or Victoria, with relevant content that we can then wrap advertisers around and let them reach their target markets," says Dave Stevens, VP, product management and strategy, Canwest Digital. "On the other hand, for larger national advertisers, we can reach that entire audience right across the board with a campaign."

Sears Canada experienced major success with national impact on canada.com through a single day takeover of the destination. Every ad placement on the canada.com network – including the main portal, all of the newspapers, all of the TV sites, Dose.ca, and all classifieds sections – were completely taken over by Sears Canada ads for the entire day.

Advertisers not wanting to make a blanket buy can make a big splash in a smaller pond with canada.com's precise targeting content, and special features customized to their unique needs and brands.



canada.com is both local and national in scope, reaching a wide range of target markets on a variety of scales.

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Sources: \*Omniture SiteCatalyst, Jan/08

\*\*comScore, Inc, Total Canada, Home and Work, Jan/08 , Unduplicated audience of canada.com Network, Alliance Atlantis Sites and E! Online

than anyone else in Canada every day, and use our content to integrate advertisers to reach our end user in their space of interest."

Rather than simply running banner ads for a car company, he says canada.com will create unique content to launch a new car, or get people in the mood for the new car season with something like a feature about the national auto show.

"We integrate people into the content without sacrificing the user experience – and we've found that to be incredibly successful," says Stevens.

When Braun wanted to zero-in on younger demos rather than the typical older-skewing technology crowd, the campaign was integrated into Dose.ca through an attractive new gadgets and gizmos section that was given an entertainment spin with features such as celebrity blogs. He says this approach really allowed Braun to target the audience it wanted to reach outside of just the standard technology fare.

As a complete solutions house for advertisers offering everything from microsites, to promotions, contests and banner ads onward, Stevens says canada.com is constantly innovating and developing new technologies and products that differentiate it from the competition.

"Going forward," says Stevens, "canada.com is focusing on content integration and behavioural targeting – being able to take an advertiser and allow them to follow a user, to deliver ads in the sections they're visiting throughout the day."

Additionally, with video becoming increasingly

important to online advertising, canada.com is working to take seven-second pre-roll ads to the next level to make the video interactive.

"While the video plays, we can place a clickable advertiser bug in the corner, much like the network bugs you see on TV. Clicking on the bug could send users to the advertiser's site or bring up a popup window with more information on the product."

## Proprietary technology for optimal results



If getting an ad message in front of the right consumers is the goal, Casale Media has the solution. Casale, Canada's largest national online display network, reaches 84% of the Canadian online audience through more than 4,000 online publishers. Ad messages are placed in online destinations most relevant to a marketer's target audience – and it's all done automatically by OPTIMAX, the company's proprietary ad serving and campaign management platform.

Julia Casale, chief marketing officer, says, "Our technology enables us to find the most relevant users within our network – about 20 million users – that will most likely interact with the advertiser's ad. It's done in real time and it's all dynamic. However, creative that does not perform will be automatically taken out of rotation so that the advertiser's dollars are not wasted."

Because the system is dynamic,

## Casale Media – Optimizing online campaigns

The combination of premium online content and industry leading optimization capabilities has made Casale Media Canada's largest national ad network. Casale's proprietary OPTIMAX platform dynamically optimizes online campaigns to maximize performance and ROI. OPTIMAX samples a campaign across Casale's network and analyzes the results in real time to determine the most effective placements and creative.

Capital One Canada has been utilizing Casale since 2006. They have seen tremendous success in tactical, strategic, and branding campaigns since partnering with Casale. Whether it's promoting a new product/service, or implementing an online marketing initiative, OPTIMAX has continued to decrease their eCPA significantly.

For enhanced performance, advertisers are encouraged to provide as much creative as possible so that OPTIMAX can automatically figure out which execution is performing adequately. "The system goes far beyond what any manual optimization process could do," says Casale's CMO Julia Casale.

Casale Media (casalemedia.com), a Canadian family-owned company, ensures an effective online experience through its focus on publisher quality and dynamic optimization technologies.

## Yahoo! Canada – Delivering a Mass Audience Reach

Canadians continue to flock to Yahoo! in steadily growing numbers. In the past six months, the portal's audience in key demographics has, in some instances, been more than double the Canadian Internet average. For Males 18 to 24, Yahoo! reaches 75% of the audience, rising 7% versus the average of 1%. Yahoo! reaches 72% of Females 25 to 44 (up 8% versus the 4% average) and 67% of Boomers (up 4% versus 2%).

Males 18-24	Females 25-44	Adults 45-64
Yahoo! +7% Y! Reach 75% Canadian Internet +1%	Yahoo! +8% Y! Reach 72% Canadian Internet +4%	Yahoo! +4% Y! Reach 67% Canadian Internet +2%

Advertisers are taking advantage of Yahoo!'s reach with unique Rich Takeover solutions currently offered by Yahoo! A recent Yahoo! Canada Front page takeover by TD Canada Trust is a great example of how, with the right creative and placement, an advertiser can get mass reach and impact online. The campaign promoted TD Canada Trust Everyday Banking product with a special promotional offer using a floating ad and a big box ad. The floating component was a woman who started at the left of the page and danced her way over to the big box ad, which contained the offer messaging.

Robin Hassan, head of sales strategy, says Yahoo!'s Front page ads perform significantly stronger than the industry average and in some cases user interaction rates are 10 times the average. These kinds of campaigns drive buzz for the client beyond the initial advertisement, measured by an immediately observed increase in searches (i.e. Buzz) for that brand's trademark and related terms.

canada.com provides advertisers with unique opportunities to integrate into content throughout the network of leading online news and information sites.



## STAY SHARP.

Now that the battlefield has moved online, we're happy to give you an unfair advantage. Yahoo! reaches over 16 million Canadians every month – that's three out of every four online.

Plus, Yahoo! offers all the most advanced marketing tools available, and the expertise to tailor them precisely to your goals.

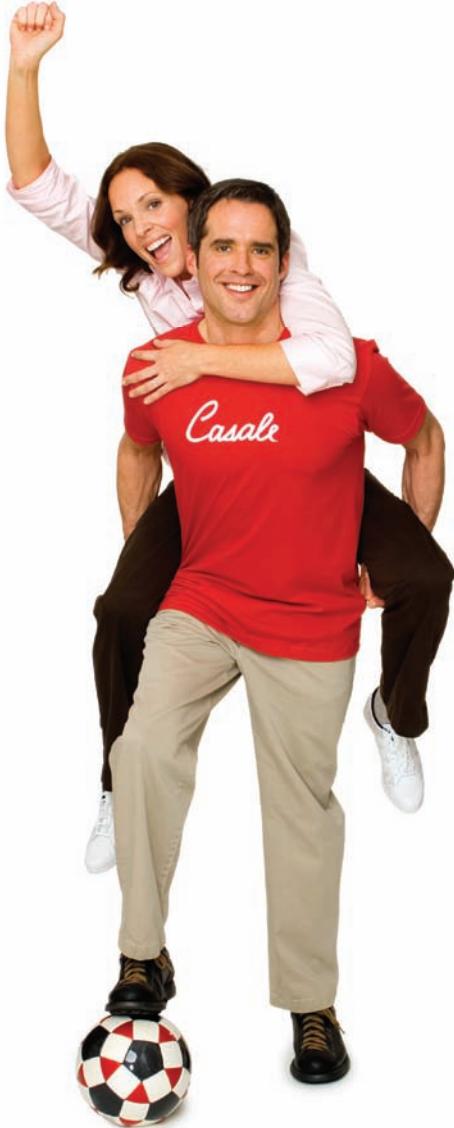
Check out the latest:

- **Enhanced Geo-targeting** – so you can be certain that you're reaching the right customers in the right place at the right time, whether they're in Victoria or Halifax
- **All-new Clickable Video platforms** – let you turn existing TV or video spots into clickable pre- and post-roll with virtually no additional creative work, enabling consumers to engage more deeply with your brand
- **Yahoo! Search** – helps your customers find you and now includes users who are searching on Canoe and other Quebecor properties, extending your reach by over 8.5M unique visitors every month
- **Coming soon: Yahoo! Direct Response** – provides you with real-time optimization and auction-based pricing to help you reach your best performing targets most efficiently

Find all the tools you need at [advertising.yahoo.ca](http://advertising.yahoo.ca). Or email us at [ca-advertise@yahoo-inc.com](mailto:ca-advertise@yahoo-inc.com). Or try that old-fashioned tool, the phone: 1-888-919-2466. We'd love to talk.

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# Your audience is on our network



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A screenshot of the WhitePages.ca website. The top navigation bar includes links for Account, Services, and Login/Register. Below the navigation, there are search categories: People Search, Business Search, Email Search, Reverse Phone, Reverse Address, Postal &amp; Area Codes, Tools &amp; Resources, and Bulk Searches. A promotional banner for Weight Watchers Turn Around is displayed. The main search area has fields for First Name, Last Name, City or Postal Area Code, Province or State, and a checkbox for 'include email listings'. To the right, there is a 'Business Search' section with fields for Business Category, Business Name, and City or Postal/ZIP Code, also with a 'Business' checkbox. A sidebar on the right features a '2007 is here! Plan your wedding, find a new car and much more.' section and a 'Compare local wedding vendors' link. A promotional banner for Capital One MasterCard is shown with the text 'In Canada, two things are Guaranteed: A cold winter and a Capital One® MasterCard.' and a 'Click here to apply' button.

Casale Media: The traditional planning process is giving way to systems that can auto-optimize campaigns based on user response and creative efficiency.

advertisers can access up-to-the-minute reports to see how their ads are performing at any time of any given day.

For more concentrated brand exposure, Casale can target audiences by geography, daypart, or through specific content such as social networking channels, news and media channels, or via its top-250 site list.

The company's advanced technology also provides the option of retargeting or action pixels.

"Retargeting pixels can be placed on the home page of brand sites so we know who has been on that home page and we can find them again on our network to re-emphasize the brand," says Casale. "Action targeting pixels are placed on shopping carts. If the consumer leaves the site without purchasing, maybe a couple of days later a new ad is served to pique their interest again to purchase the product."

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When advertisers find their target consumers at relevant destinations, the creative message has to be in sync with the target audience and the ad placement. For many marketers, pinpoint targeting is an opportunity for engagement through innovative creative executions, which often involves interactivity or video.

Nick Barbuto of Cossette says audio and video are probably the strongest ways of communicating a message to anyone, online or off, "Now that the Internet is a lot more conducive for communicating video-centric messages, I think we'll see the emphasis taken off of driving to a destination and more of an emphasis once again on the proactive communication of messages."

# CREATIVITY TO THE RESCUE



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Canadian advertising creative is being picked up internationally and our successful approaches to connecting with today's consumer are influencing the ad world. Strategy examines the marketing thought leadership coming out of Canada, and curates the new crop of campaigns that are sure to make friends and influence people at home and away.

The New Advertising will be polybagged with the June issue of *strategy*, distributed at Cannes and also delivered to a minimum of 11,000 *Globe & Mail* executive subscribers in Toronto, Vancouver & Montreal.

Ad booking deadline: May 2, 2008

Contact: Carrie Gillis [carrie@strategy.brunico.com](mailto:carrie@strategy.brunico.com)

**strategy**  
bold vision **brand** new ideas



◀ By Tony Chapman & Ken Wong ▶

## Renegade CMO: Brother, can you spare a dime?

In this Forum series, Queen's prof Ken Wong and Capital C CEO Tony Chapman tackle marketing challenges and offer up Renegade CMO solutions. This month they weigh in on how to market your way through recession.

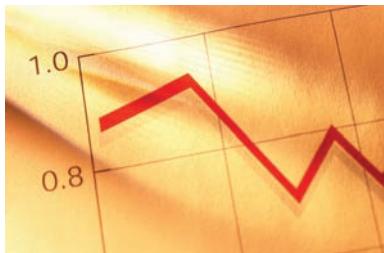
### **Tony's take:**

Last year the American consumer was armed with cheap credit, the ability to leverage up a minimum-wage job into the purchase of a no-money-down house, stocked with don't-pay-for-a-year furniture and appliances. Today there is no credit and trillions in subprime and derivative debt, and the U.S. economy is in a tailspin of such force that all of us will be sucked into it. Add to that rising commodity prices and we could be heading for a recession of epic proportions. Everything slows down and with it comes job losses, budget cuts and survival of the fittest.

My advice to marketers is to understand your consumer. Their shopping behaviour will change as media continuously reminds them how bad it is, and their lack of spending power reinforces it. They will shift their mindset from wanton and insatiable to conserve and hoard.

How will this mindset affect your marketing plan? Let's go to the four Ps. With your product strategy, I would simplify features as consumers look to satisfy needs versus wants. Positioning I would base on long-term values – whether that was functional and you focused on product durability, or emotional and you talked about experiences. Pricing: we know consumers will look for deals and spend more time trading down to price, so you'd better be creative in your offer. In terms of place, you need to fight for the corners, the last three feet of your marketing plan. This is where the battle will be fought.

The winners in this recession will add the fifth P: people. They will invest in creating a culture that embraces this downturn as an opportunity to steal share and to permanently knock out weaker opponents. What a wonderful time to be in the business of building brands.



There is a story about human behavior behind those numbers, and whoever can **read that story will find that this is a classic case of opportunity rising from change**

### **Ken's advice:**

I don't think everyone will feel it to the same degree. So marketers had better start eating their own dog food. Forget selling to everyone in the same way and start doing a better job of knowing who you're selling to (segmentation), the reason you want to sell to them (customer valuation) and how a slowdown will affect them, specifically.

The distribution of wealth across geographic regions has shifted over the past decade. The most populous regions of Canada, where much of the slowdown in manufacturing is already being felt, will feel

the effects long before the less populated, commodity-rich regions. Alberta? A no-brainer. But don't forget that Saskatoon has the highest growth in real estate prices today. So maybe it isn't a case of have and have-not but more a case of "no" (recession), "whoa" (slowdown) and "go" (slower but still prosperous) regions.

The same will apply to age groups. Older consumers will be concerned and adjust spending accordingly. But when was the last time you heard a tween or teen talk about economic conditions? Anyone who reduces brand building with those consumers will spend a lifetime trying to win them back when the recession ends and they enter their highest spending years.

Finally, go beyond the macro indicators like GDP to the micro-economic indicators that show how people are living and spending. For example, the definition of a staple may change depending upon whether we see a reduction in two-income families due to unemployment or less job creation or an increase in two-income families as people feel less secure.

The bottom line? Don't market the same way everywhere. Rather than assume recession, ask how much it's going to affect your customer. And watch the economic indicators related to employment, income, expenditure and housing. There is a story about human behavior behind those numbers, and whoever can read that story will find that this is a classic case of opportunity rising from change.

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**Ken Wong** is a career academic at Queen's School of Business who, in a feat of time management and airport endurance, wedges consulting gigs between lecturing and speaking engagements. **Tony Chapman** is an entrepreneur/career brand guru and founder of Toronto-based indie agency Capital C.



◀ By John Bradley ▶

## Kill or be killed

In a business obsessed with looking ahead, sometimes it pays to look back. Way back. In the final part of this brand-history-mining mini-series, marketing vet John Bradley sheds light on how the industry got to where it is now, and how things are changing in ways you may not yet realize. The following cautionary tale is adapted from Bradley's new book, *Cadbury's Purple Reign*.

It is a common conceit today among advertisers and marketers that the challenges currently being faced are unique. Nothing could be further from the truth. Today's long-lived brands have weathered far worse storms, and much can be learned from examining the challenges they faced.

In becoming Britain's largest cocoa manufacturer in the latter part of the 19th century, Cadbury demonstrates the value that can flow from turning one's own particular brand benefit into the unit of currency of the entire category. The superior product quality of the Cadbury Cocoa Essence brand, forcefully expressed for over 40 years via the advertising punchline of "Absolutely Pure, Therefore Best," lay at the heart of their success.

Even though both Fry and Rowntree were to follow Cadbury in launching high-quality cocoas, it did not give either of them a stake in owning the benefit of purity. Cadbury could not be trumped. While the expansion of the market meant both Cadbury's key competitors were still growing in volume, they were in fact becoming progressively weaker as brands in relation to Cadbury. The more Cadbury stood for product purity and made it important in people's minds, the more Fry and Rowntree seemed insipid. With a single-minded focus, brands can parlay their particular USP into significance across the industry, as Volvo demonstrated with the concept of safety.

Nothing lasts forever. It took 40 years, but a new category-leading benefit emerged, that of superior taste and texture. Sales of Cocoa Essence began to lose out to the superior-tasting Van Houten brand in the early 20th century. While two years of 5% declines had hardly been calamitous, Cadbury saw a turning point when many would have seen just a blip.

It is to Cadbury's credit and benefit that they responded so quickly to this new turn

of events by sidelining their biggest brand with the launch of Bournville Cocoa. Van Houten was not matching its success in sales terms by its grasping ownership of the taste benefit. They hardly advertised and retailers resented having to stock them. So the opportunity was there for Cadbury to follow Van Houten in product terms but to take the lead in claiming ownership of taste, which it did. Five years later, Bournville was Cadbury's biggest brand and sales of Cocoa Essence had declined by half.

But it had seemed a hugely risky move. Van Houten's secret was the addition of an alkali to the cocoa. This went against

This shift of a category's key benefit is arguably more common today, but how many marketing VPs would be bold enough to jettison their biggest brand, on which rested not just the profits but the entire reputation of the company?

Cadbury triumphed during this seismic category change through the convergence of several key management attributes:

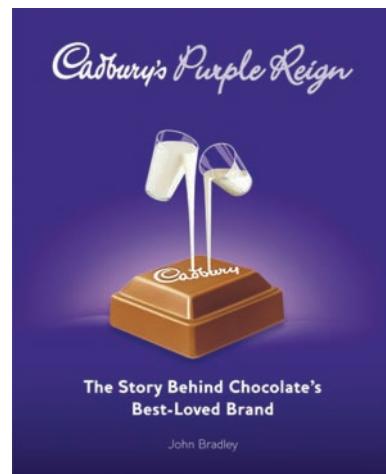
- strong external radar
- willingness to change direction, even at the expense of existing products
- speed of decision-making
- commitment to produce better products, backed by appropriate resources
- strong promotional and advertising skills

With these, Cadbury had the flexibility to keep abreast of the changing trends.

It is also significant that Cadbury's triumph did not rest on a highly productive innovation pipeline. For the first 80 years of its existence, Cadbury contributed little to the innovations driving the industry, demonstrating that product innovation is not a necessary component for success.

Microsoft invented very little of its product range, yet became the dominant force in the industry. The product that made the company, the operating system MS-DOS, was acquired for the princely sum of \$50,000 from its original author, Tim Paterson, who understood that invention and exploitation are two distinct skill sets.

Today, as many business plans rely on unspecified "breakthrough" innovations to achieve growth targets, it can be argued that having the right management attributes is far more important.



everything Cadbury had stood for with product purity – Bournville Cocoa could not claim to be 100% pure. But the market definition of quality had changed from purity to taste, so to keep the Cadbury name anchored to Cocoa Essence would have almost certainly seen the company slip into obscurity. The current demise of the American car industry shows what can happen when companies stay wedded to market drivers that have been overtaken in the consumers' minds.

**John Bradley** is a career marketer (much of it spent at Cadbury) turned consultant and author whose tome *Cadbury's Purple Reign* will be out next month. Reach him at [johnbradley@Yknotsolutions.com](mailto:johnbradley@Yknotsolutions.com).



# BARRY BASE

## 1941 – 2008

### One of the very best

So much has changed since a wide-eyed Barry Base took to the blank page and began his inspired advertising journey, beginning, as I recall, at Goodis Goldberg Soren, the creative petri dish of its day.

But while the marketplace may have altered, I would guess that if Barry could start in the business all over again today, he would nonetheless be its master.

Barry was an original, like the words that flowed so gracefully and, more often than not, provocatively through his columns, and that sold his clients' products with such cleverness, sophistication and ease.

The year was probably 1990. I had come to know and admire Barry from the previous decade of news stories I had written about him. We had just launched *strategy* and I found myself turning to Barry for the first time not as a journalist seeking an interview or commentary, but as a colleague, hoping he could help me in my search to find the right voice for the magazine.

Barry had the three qualities I wanted. He could write (a skill that was in alarmingly short supply). He had something to say. And finally, and for me most importantly, he cared.

Ad veteran and longtime *strategy* columnist Barry Base passed away Feb. 27 from a brain tumour. Born in Halifax in 1941, Base worked for a number of agencies – starting with Goodis Goldberg Soren – before founding Kaleidoscope, which underwent various transformations over the years, from Base Hamilton Edwards to Barry Base & Partners. His work ranged from a Uniroyal campaign featuring the voice of Orson Welles and the caveman from Johnny Hart's *B.C.* strip to Eaton's "Uncrates the Sun" and efforts for Seiko, Swissair and many others. He was a gifted copywriter who shared his talents with *strategy* over 13 years in a column full of passion and annoyance and titles like "20 Reasons Why Ads Suck."

"Barry had a good anger," says fellow ad icon Gary Prouk of Sebastian Consultancy, "and he seemed to stay true to what he wanted to do, which was to not be part of a large company."

"Barry wrote beautifully," says Jeffrey Shearer, publisher of *On the Bay* magazine. "He did work for me at the *Toronto Star* from 1997 to 2001. I wanted a concept for the trade media, and Barry came up with the 'Friendly Giant.' It was brilliant because it reminded everybody that the *Star* was a giant, and you couldn't ignore a giant, but you'd like to do business with a friendly one."

"Barry had a pioneering spirit," adds former GGS colleague Doug Linton. "And whether it was in an ad or a *strategy* column, his writing was never less than excellent. His rants were especially compelling. I am proud to have been his friend."

Barry Base leaves behind four children – Christian, Jonathan, Michelle and Madeline – and a legacy of nurturing the next generation via his example and his commentary in these pages.

◀ By Mark Smyka ▶

Barry cared a lot. It showed in the elegant prose he so lovingly crafted, in the scorn he heaped on second-rate work and every now and then in the rebel that lurked inside and that contributed so much to making him what he was. He had a genuine talent that was neither reliant upon technique nor subservient to the trendy.

Barry would have flourished in any era. The evidence is there, in my favorite Bill Bernbach quote which, not surprisingly, Barry used in a column one time:

"It took millions of years for man's instincts to develop, it will take millions more for them to even vary. It is fashionable to talk about changing man. A communicator must be concerned with unchanging man, with his obsessing drive to service, to be admired, to succeed, to love, to take care of his own."

Barry Base made this belief a practice, and that's why he was one of the very best.

---

**Mark Smyka**, *strategy's* founding editor, is now communications director at Cossette Communications Marketing, Toronto.

# Brilliant, wicked, brutally honest

When I started working for *strategy* magazine as special reports editor back in 2001, Barry Base scared the hell out of me. By the time I became editor a couple of years later, I was petrified.

You see, I was a know-nothing who knew nothing about the ad business, and Barry knew everything and everyone. He would see right through me, I thought, and I'm sure he did. But he was a gentleman and tolerated me – and occasionally even offered me a kind word. Working with him kept me on edge, it kept me thinking. And I learned more from Barry about advertising and, more importantly (for me), writing, than I've learned before or since.

He taught me that everything you write is a battle for your reader's attention, and your reader has a hell of a lot of choices. So for God's sake, make it *interesting*. Barry's writing was always interesting, and it spawned a series of headlines that I still can't believe we got away with. "Amputated dog testicles: toasted tastes better" was a favourite.

His columns were fascinating. Barry had a writing style that immediately transported you into his world, and it was a world of wickedly sharp perception and even sharper humour. My usual reaction after reading his latest submission was, "I can't believe he wrote that." Sometimes, I'm embarrassed to admit, we felt we had to tone it down a little. But we didn't do it often, because Barry would be on the phone the next day, and give me the hell I deserved.

Barry and fellow columnist John Burghardt began writing for *strategy* about eight years before I joined the magazine, and they were the best advertising critics Canada has ever had. They were both brilliant ad men in their own right, so they knew a good ad when they saw one. They had a sense of the industry's history that was lacking in the young creatives who thought that every idea they had was a new one. And they had a sense of how the industry was changing, for better and for worse.

*Strategy* was lucky to have Barry. He wasn't the only one who had been observing the industry for a long time, but he was one of the few brave enough to write the truth, even when it hurt. And that was the most important lesson he taught me: that truly great writing is interesting, perceptive, funny and, most importantly, brutally honest. Oh yeah, and that you should use italics whenever possible.

**Duncan Hood**, now features editor at *MoneySense* magazine, was editor of *strategy* from 2003 to 2004.



◀ By John Burghardt ▶

## Only Base was Base

If the truth be known, I've always been highly jealous of Barry Base.

To start with, Base could really write. Well, that's OK, I can write. However, Base could also draw. He even once had his own professional cartoon strip. I've got no comeback there.

And Base looked a lot like Burt Reynolds. I do not look a lot like Burt Reynolds.

And Base had a great name if you wanted to sign a column and do other creative stuff with it. He got to call his column Base Line. I can't even remember what we called my column [editor's note: *ViewPoint*], but Burghardt Line was not high on the list of candidates.

And yet, every two weeks for 11 years, I had to face him across the pages of *strategy*. Two columnists, side by side. *Mano a mano*. And man, did Barry have a lot of weapons.

Barry had a writing style that seemed effortless. It just flowed. Of course, no writer will ever admit that his job comes easily, but Barry's columns gave you that illusion. When he was stumped for an idea – and in the course of 11 years, that can happen a lot – Barry would just pick up the latest copy of *Maclean's* or *Toronto Life* or *Five Pin Bowling Monthly* and let it fly.

He would turn to an ad in his chosen issue and tell you precisely what he thought of it. Usually in italics. And then he'd turn to the next ad, and do it again. Eight-and-a-half times out of 10, he hated the ad, but he was so charming and eloquent in telling you why, it was OK. (Somebody once told me that an industry joke had developed along these lines: "I have some good news and some bad news. The good news is, your new ad is reviewed in *strategy*. The bad news is, it's reviewed by Barry Base.")

One time when I got stumped for an idea, I decided I would write a Base parody. It was called "Barry Base Reviews Shakespeare." It started like this: "So I was in Stratford the other day, and I went into this theatre, and a show was playing called *Hamlet*. Now, stop right there. What kind of name is *Hamlet*?? Sounds like a bloody luncheon meat, for godsake!! Then the guy starts talking. Nice pipes, but come on, what was he saying?? Something about 2B or not 2B, that's what it sounded like. Here's some advice, Hamster, don't be 2B!!! In this business, you got to be 1A, or don't even try!"

I stopped there. That was enough. Never finished it, never submitted it. Only Base could be Base.

But somehow, buried in those lines is the key to what made Barry one of the stars of our long-running business. Barry never settled for 2B, and to borrow his italics, *he was passionate about it*. Barry believed in excellence, preached excellence, would not settle for less than excellence. He knew the two prime rules of our craft as if he had written them – and, I don't know, maybe he actually did.

1. We're out there selling stuff.

2. Once you accept #1, swing for the fences. Break new ground, find that edge, grab attention by the *cojones* and run with it.



Barry's work demonstrated again and again that he got it. You can sell more southern travel if your store uncrates the sun. You can put an identity on snow tires if you combine a wheel-obsessed caveman with the voice of Orson Welles. Nobody else was doing those things, so Barry did.

This column doesn't try to say that Barry and I were the closest of friends, because we weren't. It doesn't try to go into the tragedy that happened to Barry, because who can explain that? What it does say is this: I have the greatest respect for the work that Barry gave us, both in and out of the pages of *strategy*; and I was honoured to spend 11 years across the page from him.

**John Burghardt** has retired from his regular strategy column, but from nothing else. He continues to focus on branding identity, primarily in the fields of health care and tourism, but he can throw together a mean resumé on his other success stories whenever the phone rings. He plays golf with great enthusiasm and little talent, and recently returned from two months in Australia.

**back** page.

# SOLVE THE MYSTERY SPLIFF YOUR BRAIN ON GAMES...

**The double whammy of adults staying younger longer**

and kids getting older faster

has created a new all-ages psychographic. Combining this eternally playful consumer with the interactivity of cyberspace has wrought countless new forms of entertainment. From UGC to alternate reality games (ARGs), many are ideal marketing ploys.

One aspect of ARGs that's especially interesting to youth is the insider appeal – solving mysteries and discovering things

for themselves. The intrigue strategy's manifestation ranges from simple teaser campaigns to full-on multiplayer real/virtual world sleuthing.

This image is part of a teaser campaign for a real new product launch. Care to guess what it is?

Send your name, address and ideas to [maddever@brunico.com](mailto:maddever@brunico.com).

We'll forward the names of those who get it right to MI5 (you're obviously beyond CSIS standards) and suitably reward any answers that amuse us.





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## THOUGHTSHIFT: KEYNOTE SPEAKER **ALEX BOGUSKY**

CO-CHAIRMAN, CRISPIN PORTER + BOGUSKY

Alex Bogusky in conversation with BCW chair Judy John, managing partner & CCO of Leo Burnett, Toronto.



## BRANDSHIFT: **EDDY MORETTI**

CO-FOUNDER, VICE FILMS/ VBS.TV

Eddy Moretti will relate how VICE marries creativity with its business model in order to steer the brand wherever the consumer wants it next.



## DESIGNSHIFT: **JAKOB TROLLBÄCK**

PRESIDENT & CREATIVE DIRECTOR, TROLLBÄCK & COMPANY

Designer Jakob Trollbäck will discuss how amidst a fundamentally shifting industry, Trollbäck + Co is continually able to leverage design thinking to stay relevant.



## AGENCYSHIFT: **LARS BASTHOLM**

EXECUTIVE CREATIVE DIRECTOR, AKQA, NEW YORK

Lars Bastholm will share how AKQA, a 700-person strong virtual powerhouse, navigates into areas previously thought "off limits" for digital agencies, and its unique approach to the creative process.

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